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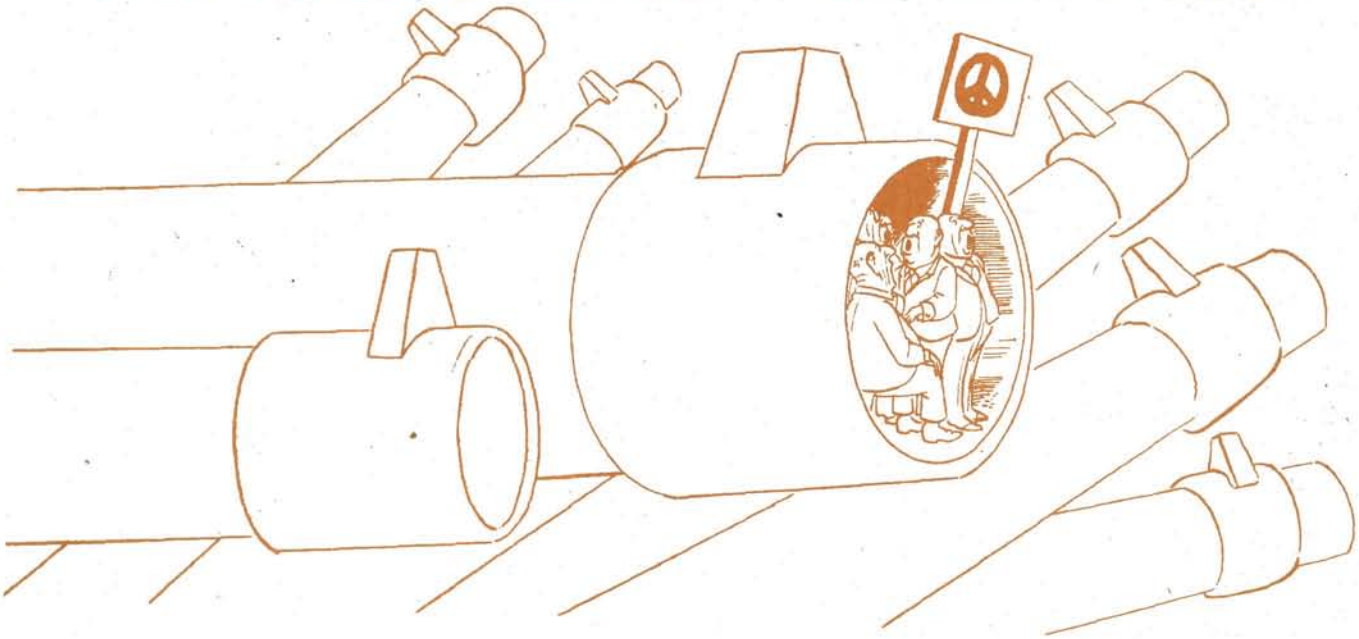
HARD CHOICES IN THE DEFENSE BUDGET

JAMES O'GARA

STAND-OFF IN THE MIDDLE EAST



SISYPHUS A POLITICAL ASH WEDNESDAY
THOMAS POWERS WRITING SAIGON'S OBITUARY
MICHAEL NOVAK CATHOLIC, NOT CAPITALIST/SOCIALIST
MICHAEL TRUE LOCKING OUT THE PRISON CHAPLAIN
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR. SNAKES ALIVE!
LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM AN OBEDIENT PROPHET
BERNARD BERGONZI THE MINDSZENTY MEMOIRS
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DANIEL MORRISSEY UPDIKE'S SUNDAYS UNBLESSED

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NEWS & VIEWS

The Grape Boycott

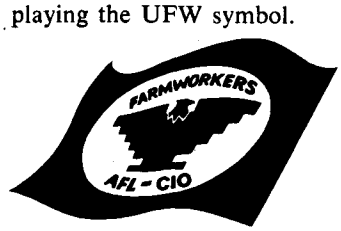
United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO, has stepped up its organizing activities in the major and secondary cities of the country, with special emphasis on New York City and environs.

The objective is to enlist volunteers who will develop neighborhood organizations to carry on the grape boycott. Summer is the time when organizers are needed most, since it is the time of the grape harvest. New York is central in the planning, as it is by far the largest consumer area in the U.S.

Volunteers will undergo training in the art of organizing, then receive the same benefits as Cesar Chavez and all members of the UFW: room, board, $5 a week, and transportation money in the area of work.

The training program in the New York area is being conducted by Fred Ross, Sr., UFW's national boycott director. He's at 331 West 84th St., NYC, 10024; telephone, 212-799-5800. Elsewhere—Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Boston, Atlanta, etc.—information may be had by phoning the local United Farm Workers office.

The grape harvest began in mid-May, and early in the season a limited quantity of UFW-union grapes arrives at market. These are the grapes of the David Freedman Co., packaged under the labels Lionel or Travertine, and displaying the UFW symbol.



By the end of July, however, there will be no more union grapes on the market. That's when the boycott will aim for particular acuteness.

Grapes, of course, make wine—and Gallo wines remain a UFW target. The Gallo boycott is a couple of years old now, and Gallo shows the strain. Recently it quickened a multi-million dollar media campaign, pushing such products as Madria Madria Sangria, a specialty 'pop' wine introduced in 1974. Under UFW pressure, the Federal Trade Commission is investigating whether these media ads are deceptive because they do not mention that the wine is made by Gallo.

Some Gallo products: Boone's Farm, Carlo Rossi, Eden Roc, Andre, Ripple, Paisano, Red Mountain—in fact, any wine whose label says "Modesto, California." Gallo is the only wine company with headquarters in Modesto.

Vatican & the UN

Largely ignored by the press was a UN look earlier in the spring into a Vatican report on discrimination.

A five-page document consisting of excerpts of papal, synodal and other statements condemning racial discrimination went before the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

It got a mixed reception. Several committee members expressed satisfaction with the report. Others pointed to its generalized nature and regretted the absence of concrete measures aimed at combating racial discrimination in specific parts of the world, as South Africa.

Father John Lucal of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the UN said that the Vatican's contribution was mainly in the areas of education and formation of public opinion.

Prof. Karl Josef Partsch of Germany was unimpressed. He rejected the statement that the Vatican and the UN were in accord in a common effort to be friend and protector of the freedom and dignity of all people without distinction. He charged that "the Roman Catholic Church practices discrimination in respect to sex."

Eliot & Teilhard

An insight into Teilhard and Eliot, via Victoria Glendinning's review of Dorothea Straus' *Showcases*, a continuing autobiographical *causerie*, in the May 9 *Times Literary Supplement*:

"Other great men who failed to behave like gods were T. S. Eliot and Teilhard de Chardin. Eliot had been a literary idol since college days; but, when she and her husband visited him in Robert Giroux's flat in New York, Mrs. Straus was disconcerted to find him twirling a gold swizzle-stick and speaking 'in a clipped British accent about the difficulty in finding accommodations in the Virgin Islands.' It was years before she was reconciled to the 'triviality' of her 'Eliot encounters.'

"Teilhard de Chardin was a family friend, 'but none of us was specially concerned with his ideas.' This hero did not let her down; she failed, at the time, to identify him as such. In another dining-room vignette, she describes a lunch at her father's house. Mrs. Straus's brother was at that time married to the film actress Linda Darnell:

> I see her in full opulent colour, with wide rich brown eyes and flowing dark hair; having just arisen she was wearing a negligée that revealed a broad expanse of snowy white chest and the deep cleavage of her bosom like an alpine ravine.

There she sat, sipping pure gin, with a mangy marmoset perched on her shoulder; and next to this exotic pair was placed Teilhard de Chardin. After lunch, before the coffee, he disappeared—understandably—for a long nap on father's bed."

'The Critic's' SOS

Distress signals from another journal of religious/cultural/literary identification: *The Critic* is going to quarterly publication and appealing for help in making possible its "continued existence."

A letter to subscribers from editor Joel Wells notes that the 33-year-old magazine has been subsidized "for years" by activities of the Thomas More Association. Such subsidization, he said, can no longer continue without jeopardizing both the association and the magazine.

Beginning next fall, therefore, *The Critic* will cut back from five to four issues a year, and hike the subscription rate from $6 to $9 a year. "Wisely or not," writes Wells, "we have not raised the subscription price of *The Critic* for more than ten years." (Readers are being given the opportunity to renew or extend their present subscription at the old rate.)

Wells fingers postage, paper and production costs as the source of *The Critic*'s woes. The new quarterly *Critic* will be fatter and meatier, in Wells' words, "at least the equivalent to a medium-sized book."

Odds and Ends

— *Near-Quote of the Week*: Pensylvania State Representative William Wilt in protesting a gubernatorial executive order banning job discrimination in state government based on affectional or sexual preference: "Shortly after World War II, when we had the problems with the Communist party infiltrating various parts of the government, they got most of their information and were able to make the inroads that they made because they worked through homosexuals. They blackmailed them."

Representative Wilt loses out to Connecticut State Representative Raymond Liddy, who spoke against a gay-rights bill in that state: "If God wanted things this way he would have made Adam and Peter, and Eve and Alice, and he didn't."

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Jews & Christians

Austin, Texas

To the Editors: The Vatican's recently released document "Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration 'Nostra Aetate'" attempts to make further progress towards the reconciliation of Catholics and Jews in particular, and all Christians and Jews in general [Jan. 31]. Most of the discussion in recent years has focused on what Christians can do to make up for their past treatment of Jews and to create closer relationships for spiritual as well as societal benefits. In considering this issue, one must keep in mind the highly parochial attitude of Jews towards Christians. It may indeed be the case that the level of anti-Christianism among Jews may be higher than the level of anti-Semitism among Christians.

Obviously, my fellow religionists appropriately see themselves as having been severely injured by 2000 years of Christian anti-Semitism. This has developed a highly defensive attitude towards "goyim." Undoubtedly, this we-they approach was necessary for cultural survival during the long dark ages of the diaspora. Unfortunately these attitudes have continued well beyond the time when circumstances warranted them. The defensive attitudes of two millennia are not easily dissipated, and the increasing isolation and military threat towards Israel tend to lead toward a higher degree of defensiveness and inner solidity.

But these attitudes must be resisted. For Christians the important fact is to understand the depth and degree of this hostility. And they should not be surprised when overtures are met with something less than full-throated enthusiasm. At the same time there is a great missionary job to be done among the Jews and Christians interested in this problem. Those Christians interested in narrowing the gap must consider working directly with leaders of the

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THE MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

One way to test the reasonableness of the actions taken by the United States in the Mayagüez incident is to ponder whether the same set of decisions would have been made if the nation involved were not weak, tiny Cambodia but instead China or Russia. The conclusion can only be that an entirely different course would have been followed, one much more sane (if only because of the intimidating nature of these peer powers) and one presumably more balanced in cause/effect response. Negotiations, for instance, would likely have meant precisely that—not 24-hour ultimatums; and judicious reaction would have meant something other than the turning loose of trigger-happy military forces.

In this context, the sinking of the Cambodian patrol boats, the bombings of the Cambodian mainland, and the Marine invasion of Tang Island, for however brief a battle, amount to colossal overreaction to an incident whose circumstances were anything but clear, then as now, with respect to culpability and responsibility. The Mayagüez was thirty miles from the Cambodian mainland, and only two-to-seven miles (depending upon what U.S. official was speaking at what particular moment) from an island claimed by Cambodia. Analogies are seldom exact, but under the circumstances Cambodia's action seems not too much different from what U.S. action might have been, if in a militarily tense situation an unfriendly boat wandered into Nantucket waters. Nantucket waters are not international waters. If one counters by observing that Nantucket is an acknowledged territorial part of the U.S., who then is the U.S. to decide that Tang Island is not integral to Cambodia? In any instance, a disputed claim with Vietnam over Tang Island does not give the U.S. or any other nation the right to traffic indiscriminately (innocently or otherwise) in the land, sea or air areas affected by that claim. Besides, the hypersensitive political and military sit-

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uation in Southeast Asia, and incidents a few days before involving South Korean and Panamanian vessels in the same area, should have dictated a caution on the part of the Mayagüez that was obviously not present, nor, it seems, strongly recommended by U.S. authorities.

This is not to say that the Mayagüez incident was deliberately provoked by the U.S. It is to suggest, however, that the incident was welcomed by the Ford administration and the Pentagon in order to dramatize American "resoluteness." So the bully flexed his muscles and tingled to the exertion. The elephant-gun was got out to zap the gnat. The brute triu(m)phed. But it was a cowardly performance. Most such exercises are.

Not less dismaying than the display of the White House and the Pentagon was that of the Congress: Senator Clifford Case, co-author of the 1973 legal ban on military action in Indochina, telling President Ford he could ignore the law; Senator Hubert Humphrey rushing to rally 'round the flag; Senator Hugh Scott bristling when pressed as to whether congressional leaders had merely been advised about the leap to militarism, or consulted as the law stipulates they should have been; House minority leader John Rhodes declaring through a spokesman that he had no complaint because he was notified about the acts of war rather than consulted. Where were all the lessons allegedly learned over the past decade about presidential authoritarianism? Where were all those new sensitivities about the co-responsibility of the Congress? The Mayagüez incident could have been another Gulf-of-Tonkin time bomb, but the voices that so warned were lonesome indeed.

One expected considerable reassessment by many senators and representatives in the cooler aftermath of the incident. But even as the official Washington "story" became porous, as the casualty list grew, and as new details became known of the extent of the militarism, the chorus of approval continued at crescendo level. It is a scary thing when a Congress can get swept up in a patriotic emotionalism born of a lunatic military aggression.

Then there was Secretary of State Henry Kissinger talking of American lives and American property, and sounding for all the world like Richard Nixon—who he seems to have been more than most of us realized at the time. Kissinger was at Ford's side or near his telephone-ear throughout the Mayagüez incident, and if he did not dictate the U.S. response, he certainly helped modulate it. Many people are having second thoughts about Henry Kissinger, and well they might. There is strong suspicion that he would have had the bombers back over Hanoi in the last days of Vietnam. And there is still the unexplained business about the secret agreements between then-President Nixon and South Vietnamese President Thieu at the time of the Paris Peace Accords—agreements whose existence Kissinger denied to all the world. If Henry Kissinger is not a liar, then he is an equivocator. In either case, he is not the man of peace that much of the world thought he was. The U.S. seems stuck with him for the duration of the Ford term, and so much the worse for us all so far as principle is concerned.

So much the worse, too, for the Nobel Prize Committee, whose medal for peace Kissinger owns. We do not know if there is any machinery in the Nobel operation for the rescinding of awards, but if there is it ought to be activated and applied to Kissinger. He has made the Nobel Peace Prize a mockery of everything for which it is supposed to stand.

WASHINGTON REPORT

A POLITICAL ASH WEDNESDAY

There they were on a Wednesday in mid-May applauding President Ford for his overwrought military response to a Cambodian gunboat's seizure of an American merchant ship, the Mayagüez, and its crew in the Gulf of Siam.

These were the same men—these United States senators—who for approximately 10 years had learnedly preached and lectured in erudite phrases and expressively wrung their hands over the appearance of "Caesarism" in a succession of recent Democratic and Republican presidents. Presidents who made military commitments and, as if in an afterthought, notified the Congress. Some of these senators had risked their political futures during the height of our belligerency in Vietnam by working successfully to enact into law restrictions upon a president's authority to commit troops to combat.

Yet when the military maneuver to retrieve the Maygüez became known, these senior senatorial "doves" reacted as did the legendary senatorial "hawks." Doves and hawks said in effect to the Cambodian Government: you Lilliputians kicked our dog; now, we, the world's Gulliver, are kicking your dog. Actually, Gulliver kicked back more than once. To change the simile, we just about sank the entire Cambodian gunboat navy. Only a few senators dissented—Abourezk, Clark, Hathaway, Kennedy and McGovern among them.

The military intervention seemed unnecessary, both as to its initiative and, indisputable, as to its crushing

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degree. Even men in the Pentagon were saying, when the seizure was first made known, that it quite likely was the result of a belligerent Cambodian gunboat commander—and *not* the result of an order from the disorganized Cambodian central government, controlled by the Khmer Rouge that had barely installed itself in Phnom Penh, the capital. What did the sinking of the Cambodian gunboats, in retaliation, contribute to the safe repatriation of the Mayagüez crew? At least five, and perhaps many more, American combat soldiers were killed in the effort to retrieve the American-flag vessel and the crew. It was successful, as the chortling President later explained, and that apparently is all that counted in his eyes and those of his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, the Nobel peace prize winner. And, in so doing, Mr. Ford dealt a major setback to Ronald Reagan and others who would challenge him for his party's presidential nomination next year. Perhaps this was, indeed, his prime consideration during the whole episode.

There are restrictions and prohibitions about the use of military force in Southeast Asia. There's the so-called Church-Case provision of law that forbids a president to engage in military hostilities in, over or around Vietnam, Laos and *Cambodia*. There's also the 1973 War Powers Act which states that a president may commit military forces to hostilities or situations wherein hostilities might occur *only pursuant* to (a) a declaration of war, (b) specific statutory authorization, or (c) a national emergency created by an attack upon the United States, its territory, possessions or its armed forces. There are other restrictions/prohibitions written into law. One requires, among other things, consultation with the Congress before a military operation is undertaken. Even the (Republican) Minority Leader in the Senate, Hugh Scott, conceded that he was informed by telephone that the retrieval operation was to begin, but was not asked about whether it should be undertaken. Ditto, Senator Mansfield, the (Democratic) Majority Leader.

Yet senators turned their backs on these laws, which they had worked so hard for and voted for in an effort to restrain presidents from launching unnecessary military missions. They succumbed to the conventional assertion of bellicose presidents, including Ford, that the Constitution contains an inherent right to send military forces to protect American lives and property. The assertion does have justification, but it has led, too, to unnecessary American military forays to the Philippines, Cuba and other Caribbean places, Central and Latin America, and the Middle East (Lebanon) in the 1950s. Even one body of opinion in "international law" that supports President Ford in his actions states that the military action should not be "excessive"—Whiteman's *Digest of International Law*, and Corwin's *The President: Office and Powers* that discusses "the action of Great Britain, in connection with the Canadian rebellion of 1837, in invading American waters and destroying the Caroline, a vessel employed by American sympathizers with the rebels to convey arms to them." The United States, at the time, recognized this principle and accepted invasion of its waters.

President Ford's dispatching of Marines and the Air Force to deal with the seizure came as if Cambodia had invaded San Diego. At this writing, the full story is not available—if it ever is permitted to become available to the public, except in fragments leaked to favorite pressmen. However, there is a basis for a reasonable surmise that an effort to regain the vessel by diplomatic means had not yet been fully exercised. Furthermore, the chronology known now shows that the Cambodian Government had agreed to release the ship. This was known to the White House, but the military operation continued anyway, in which American servicemen were killed. This suggests our military operation was one of punishment and retaliation, not one to simply retrieve ship and crew. Additionally, it is not clear at this point why the ship hadn't been warned to stay away from the general area.

The United States Government knew that in early May South Korean and Panamanian vessels had been fired upon in the same area. The Panamanian vessel, in fact, had been boarded by crew of a Cambodian gunboat. Yet five days to a week after these two events happened, the Mayagüez was sailing through these same shipping pathways.

It can be narrowly argued that the prohibitions and restraints upon the use of military force did not apply in the case of the seizure of the Mayagüez. Indeed, some of the principal senatorial supporters of the cited restrictive legislation did publicly take this position. They went on to declare that the president always has an inherent right to protect American lives and property. But Ford's action exceeded the permission contained in the Corwin language, for example. These senators ignored the waters for the waves.

Yet these same senators argued in the 1960s and into the 1970s that President Johnson, for one, had grossly misapplied the support for him contained in the Gulf-of-Tonkin resolution approved by the Senate, with only Senators Gruening and Morse dissenting, after an American destroyer had been fired upon by North Vietnamese craft. Most recently, the Senate and the House of Representatives—a majority of them elected *after* the lethal lesson of the Gulf-of-Tonkin was spread upon the public record—professed to have learned its lesson at the hands of furtive, secretive presidents—Johnson and Nixon—who, respectively, put us into Vietnam in force and then kept us there until we were licked.

That lesson has obviously not been learned. The brave words of senators, vowing to stand up to presidents who would try to bully nations, have turned to ashes. Let none of them strut about in the Senate ever again denouncing presidents who abuse their authority in foreign

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policy. They had their chance in May of 1975. They caved in. All the finery of their forthcoming rationales for their position in this episode will not disguise their failure.

The president, any president, continues to be the helmsman in any gulf he wishes to sail—or any Rubicon he wishes to cross. Bellum vobiscum.

SISYPHUS

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CHURCH & STATE IN RHODE ISLAND

LOCKING OUT THE PRISON CHAPLAIN

"We are casualties of Governor Noel's lumps and bumps philosophy," said Ronald Marstin, S.M., on March 5, when he found himself locked out of the minimum security building of the Rhode Island Adult Correctional Institutions (ACI).

As co-chaplain to the prison since September, 1974, Father Marstin has been faced with increasing restrictions in fulfilling his responsibility as chaplain, first by the state (by order of the warden) and later by the church (through the office of the bishop); for the past month, he and his two associates, Brother Michael Reis, F.S.C., and Sister Constance Guertin, P.M.. have refused to enter the prison facilities until they are allowed to perform their duties as ministers to the prisoners.

For Father Marstin, the matter is essentially a prison issue; he has been excluded, he says, without formal charges or a hearing by the Governor or the Department of Corrections, with no allegations of improper conduct or of any violation of the original agreement between the Diocese of Providence and the Department of Corrections.

The prison's policy toward the chaplaincy appears to be consistent with a general policy that has provoked concern among state officials and the general public in recent years. Several administrators have been charged (and prosecuted) for brutality and mismanagement at various levels in Rhode Island's major prison facility. More recently, in this, "the most Catholic state in the Union," the restrictions against Father Marstin raised serious questions about church-state relations as well. On April 9, the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit in Federal Court charging that barring a priest from the Adult Correctional Institute and thus denying the prisoners' access to religion violated the First Amendment. And on April 16, thirty-five persons, including eleven diocesan priests, signed a statement accusing Louis E. Gelineau, Bishop of Providence, of capitulating to Governor Philip W. Noel on the matter involving the prison chaplaincy.

Governor Noel, who describes himself as a traditional Catholic, has said that "we don't need religious [who go into the prison under the guise] of tending to the religious and spiritual needs of the prisoners and then take to advocating prisoners' rights and [stirring up] a lot of agitation and grief." Noel agrees with Warden James W. Mullen that a priest should be admitted to the prison only "to say Mass, hear confessions, and perform his duties as a priest." Although he has made statements supporting the advocacy role of the chaplains, Bishop Gelineau, in his recently published guidelines, suggests that he and the Governor expect the chaplain to perform primarily a cultic role.

On April 16, the bishop dissolved the team chaplaincy, Father Marstin disagreeing with the new guidelines and Brother Reis and Sister Guertin resigning in support of his position. The conflict arose in part over the following stipulation in the bishop's guidelines for future chaplains: "In the exercise of this ministry . . . when a violation of human rights is alleged, remedial action is to be taken by the chaplains only with prior recourse to and approval from the Bishop." This point conflicted with previous policy, whereby the team functioned largely on its own, and with Father Marstin's recommendation that chaplains deal directly with prison officials on matters of social justice for prisoners.

In their statement on the evening of April 16 supporting Father Marstin, the thirty-five persons, principally priests, sisters, and laity long involved in inner-city ministries, criticized Bishop Gelineau, saying that "by the excessive limitations of his advocacy policy, the bishop has effectively eliminated any self-respecting ministers from functioning at the ACI. Only a team that is willing to be silent in the face of observed injustice will be allowed to enter the prison." Their conclusion: "We unequivocably oppose this position of our bishop."

Additional evidence against the prison administration and in support of the chaplains, including editorials in the Providence *Evening Bulletin* and statements by other religious bodies, suggests that dismissing the team won't solve the problem for the governor or the bishop. This spring, for example, during the controversy over the chaplains, the governor's own advisory commission on corrections called for the removal of James W. Mullen, the warden at ACI, with charges that fear pervaded the medium security building and its control was under the "vise-like grip of the supervisory authority." In early April, three black organizations and a prisoners reform group demanded that the U.S. Attorney investigate inhumane treatment of inmates, when twelve men

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in solitary confinement were denied food. Last fall, deputy warden Frederick Chiarine, Jr., paid $5,000 in punitive damages, after a long investigation of brutality to inmates in the medium security building.

In the midst of this situation, Father Marstin's insistence on the advocacy mission for the Church, supported by quotations from Papal documents since the Second Vatican Council and from the United States Catholic Conference statement on *The Reform of Correctional Institutions in the 1970s* (November, 1973), takes on special meaning.

An Australian Marist, who is also a doctoral student and part-time teacher in applied theology at Harvard Divinity School, Father Marstin is not the first priest to be dismissed from the Adult Correctional Institute for taking seriously his job as chaplain. In July, 1973, his predecessor, Father Normand J. Demers, a diocesan priest, was barred from the ACI after he made charges, later substantiated, of brutal treatment of inmates by guards and state troopers, leaving the prison without a chaplain for nine months.

Guidelines for the present team chaplaincy grew out of the subsequent discussions of Father Demers' replacement, involving the governor and Father Francis J. Guidice, the Vicar for Community Affairs, who is still a key person in the debate. Those agreements may have been seriously undermined by Bishop Gelineau's recent statements; according to the statement by the diocesan group on April 16, the bishop showed "a total lack of trust in the team to be appointed in the future."

In order to replace Father Demers in 1973, Bishop Gelineau had to go outside the diocese; at the moment, it looks as if he will have an even more difficult time finding a second replacement, in two years, for the job. But maybe Governor Noel will help. According to some residents of Rhode Island, where church and state are disconcertingly one, the two men could change jobs and no one would ever know the difference.

MICHAEL TRUE

(Michael True is chairman of the English Department at Assumption College and lecturer at Clark University in Massachusetts.)

EDWARD PROFFITT

OUR DECOR

It surely is not a natural thing
To have forsythia except in spring,
Much less to have it spread across the walls
And creep along the ceiling, where it crawls,
Or seems to, into the ceiling light,
And lends a sense of life to winter's night.
But there it is, green stems and yellow blooms
The handiwork of men in their own rooms—
This one my study, where I sometimes sit
Like a tired bird, who having quit
The air, will settle far from reach or sight
Within the thicket, resting from its flight.
Hard Times lies open on my desk—the stern
Victorians, like brass, pipe up and spurn
My fancy, spring-like, shimmering, a harp
Despite the winter's wind and the snow's sharp
Tongue; yet they would cover chair legs from fear
Of metaphor, and thus deprived, not hear
Such music as redeems the waning year.
A rustling in my brain, my thought goes flying:
It is for want of this that we are dying:
For want of metaphor as nothing more
Than metaphor, but that enough, a store
To draw on in hard times, or a sudden find
Of seedy semblances to feed the mind,
Itself a living part of all it sees,
Its pulses but a startled swarm of bees
Remaking spring, its fashionings, a nest
To settle in and coo, and then to rest.
And so, I am content to nestle here,
And harp upon my fancy as the year
Spins out, and feel the branches curling round,
And bear old winter's whistle—it a sound
Of music, too—and ready for another spring,
Myself a whole and wholly natural thing.

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CATHOLIC, NOT CAPITALIST/SOCIALIST

MICHAEL NOVAK

It seems unlikely that millions of young Catholics in America now learn even that there *is* a Catholic social theory, let alone *what* it is. Can one point to a field in Catholic thinking more underdeveloped? Most of what passes as social thinking in Catholic writing today is almost entirely derivative. Derivative, indeed, is too weak a word: watered-down, non-theoretical, highly emotive capitalism or socialism, would be more exact. The deliverances of "liberation theology," for example, are imported from book to book without ever passing through the concrete experience of real cultural traditions, actual social conditions, historically dominant attitudes and institutions. The social texture of Lima or Rio is obviously not the same as the social texture of Cleveland or Buffalo.

In Europe, conferences are held on the failure of socialism. "Were we wrong in theory, or only in application?" intelligent socialists are asking. It goes without saying that the theory and practices of capitalism are in at least equal disrepair.

One out of every four Americans is Catholic. One would think that at least a few would have something distinctive to bring forth, some social vision better than any competitor's. Catholic traditions antedate the traditions of capitalism and marxism. For both of the latter, Calvinist attitudes toward money, labor, and social engineering provide support, like bricks for ivy. (The Soviets prefer "social realism," and are as morally severe as Puritans.) As we reach the end of the Protestant era, both in America and in the world, what social vision have North American Catholics to bring forth?

We get a glimpse, in *Poverty in American Democracy*, prepared by the Campaign for Human Development of the U.S. Catholic Conference. It is a good and useful booklet, and yet exceedingly disappointing. Graduate students in Seattle, or Santa Barbara, or Champaign, or Cambridge could have prepared most of it. Apart from some selected quotations from various Popes, synods, and Catholic publications, the volume represents a fashionable left-wing "study of social power." It relies very heavily at its critical turning points on Dorothy B. James' *Poverty, Politics and Change*, on Gabriel Kolko, Richard Parker, Sidney Lens, William Domhoff, on Piven and Cloward, on Mintz and Cohen, on Tom Christoffel, and on other staples of recent criticism. It is based less on the work of scholars than on that of polemicists on one side of the argument. Although it promises in its last section "a unique Catholic contribution to the upcoming bicentennial," it shows no real independence of mind. It develops none of the unique possibilities it occasionally points to. (By contrast, Thomas Sowell's *Race and Economics* is a genuinely original and tough look at similar problems from a distinct perspective: that of a black American who is resolutely independent and unfashionable.)

The authors of *Poverty in American Democracy* do make gestures. They quote Barbara Mikulski, and speak from time to time of some of the distinctive cultures, traditions and economic situations in which real concrete Catholics in the United States find themselves. This is an advance. But they do not seem to know that Catholics in Buffalo, Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York, Detroit, Cleveland and other cities are producing concrete "studies of social power" in their immediate localities—about poverty among Italians in New York City, e.g., and about the boards of directors of corporations in Chicago. The picture that emerges is far different in tone and substance from the present one.

The average wage of a factory worker in the U.S. is, for example, $8600. There is no family allowance. A family on welfare can obtain as much as $7900 per year, sometimes more. Moreover, as Sowell shows, there is considerable differentiation within cultural groups with respect to how they cope with poverty. Cultural factors are more decisive than skin color. (West Indian blacks, e.g., do remarkably well in America; so also do Japanese and Chinese.) How does one work with—or against—cultural factors? The present text seems innocent of cultural sophistication. How odd, for Catholics!

Moreover, there is no significant analysis in this volume of the differential role of family structure in economic strategies. If a family first pays off its mortgage *before* it sends its children to college, or the reverse; if a family uses real estate purchases, improvements, and resale, to improve its standing, rather than relying on its wages; if a family draws on cousins, in-laws, and other relatives for free auto repairs, home improvements, paint jobs, and capital investment in a family business—as these and other conditions vary statistically from cultural tradition to cultural tradition, economic success in America also varies. One would expect Catholics in America to have developed a distinctive sociological and economic analysis of famliy traditions, but they have not. A social reform based on helping families differentially, according to need, might be a tremendously important social innovation.

What we here get instead are vague exhortations to "justice," "participation," and "equitable distribution"—all of which are so noble as to oblige assent, without binding anyone to any

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HARD CHOICES IN THE DEFENSE BUDGET

PETER J. OGNIBENE

Between the Laird and Schlesinger Pentagons: little substantive difference

Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger has been on the job for nearly two years now and has largely succeeded in putting his stamp on the Pentagon, particularly in the way the institution deals with Congress and the public. When he and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General George Brown, testify before a congressional committee, it becomes immediately apparent to even the most casual observer that the civilian head of the department is in command and the military properly subordinate. Nearly all the legislators' questions are directed to Schlesinger, who generally fields them without the help of a row of aides such as used to accompany former Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird. Schlesinger usually has the answers; the congressmen know this and as a result rarely ask anything of Brown: a situation which seems to embarrass the secretary who, on occasion, has actually solicited committee members to direct questions at the silent, sitting general.

There is also a marked difference in the institutional tone of the Pentagon. Laird had an extensive cold-war vocabulary and a bag of hard-sell tactics to push military programs on Capitol Hill. For example, he preferred provocative phrases, such as "The Threats to Free World Security," for headings in his annual defense posture statement whereas Schlesinger uses less apocalyptic terms, such as "Significant Developments in Foreign Capabilities." Of greater significance has been Schlesinger's abandonment of the worst of the military's worst-case analyses which always assumed that Soviet weapons would operate almost perfectly while ours would malfunction according to "Murphy's Law" (viz., everything that could possibly go wrong would). Schlesinger, on the other hand, acknowledged in his recent posture statement that he considers "a Soviet surprise attack 'out of the blue' to be quite unlikely under the current circumstances. . . . A nuclear attack on the United States, even one which is limited to our strategic offensive forces, would most likely be preceded by a series of crises, and certainly by a sharp deterioration in our relations with the Soviet Union. Under these circumstances, we would have the time to place virtually the entire force on ground alert." Moreover, he explicitly noted that "the presence of both bombers and ICBMs in our forces virtually precludes the Soviet Union from destroying them both in a surprise attack." Laird would never have conceded such obvious realities for fear he might undercut his sales pitch.

So, in several ways the Pentagon has changed for the better, and Schlesinger certainly deserves credit for it. Yet these have largely been surface changes. When one looks closely at the defense budget, one finds there is very little substantive difference between the Laird and Schlesinger Pentagons. In spite of U.S.-Soviet agreements to limit nuclear arms, the weapons begun by Laird have been perpetuated by Schlesinger with apparently little or no examination. Although the more blatant arguments have disappeared from official papers, when the written statements are put aside, Schlesinger is apt to worry aloud about "the illusion of American omnipotence" turning into "a perception of American impotence" or argue emotionally that the defense budget must grow "if the United States is to continue to play its historic role as the mainstay of the free world." What that role is and the assumptions underlying it have been addressed by him in only the vaguest terms.

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Schlesinger recently presented Congress with a $105 billion budget which is $16 billion greater than last year's and, according to a Pentagon statement, "represents a conscious effort on the part of the President to reverse the erosion of DoD [Department of Defense] purchasing power." Schlesinger had no "apology" to offer for the budget and in fact said he hoped it would spark "a national debate." Unaccountably, however, he declined to appear before the Senate Budget Committee on March 14 after he had been scheduled to appear concurrently with former Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Warnke, a critic of administration military policies. The secretary's staff informed the committee that they "objected to the format planned for the hearing," which would have been, in effect, a debate.

Congress has generally been supine to the military's desires. The House Armed Services Committee has been little more than "the Pentagon's lobby on the Hill," to quote Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D. Colo.), one of the committee's few dissident members. The Senate Armed Services Committee occasionally cuts a Pentagon request but usually restores it when confronted in conference by the solidly hawkish delegation from the House. The appropriations committees generally levy a cut of three to five percent which, Pentagon officials privately concede, coincides with the percentage of padding in the budget. The Constitution explicitly empowers Congress "to raise and support armies" and "to provide and maintain a navy"; yet through disuse, that power has effectively been usurped by the executive branch. The key to any substantial cut in the defense budget, then, is a decision by Congress to assert its constitutional prerogative to determine what forces shall be at the disposal of the President as Commander-in-Chief. In the past, it has not.

There was recently an indication that Congress may now be ready to reassert this power. Early this year President Ford asked the legislature to rescind about a billion dollars of fiscal 1975 appropriations, including $123 million for F-111 fighters which the air force had not requested but Congress had nonetheless authorized. Both appropriations committees, however, refused to cut funds for the plane and reported bills to the floor which left the F-111 untouched. Although no weapon had been killed by a floor vote in recent years, majorities in the House and Senate broke that precedent by voting to end production of the plane. This show of independence may have implications of far greater importance than the fate of the F-111.

For four years the President had requested that no more funds be spent for these Texas-built planes, and for four years Congress kept them rolling down the production line. The key to the plane's longevity was not its military merit so much as the clout of the Texas congressional delegation and, in particular, the nearly absolute power of the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. George Mahon (D. Texas), over projects great and small in the 435 congressional districts. The 94th Congress altered the power equation in January when the House Democratic Caucus ousted three committee chairmen, two of whom were from Texas: Reps. Wright Patman of Banking and Currency and W. R. Poage of Agriculture. Mahon held onto his seat, but 94 votes were cast against him in the caucus largely in protest of his arbitrary control of the legislative pursestrings. These votes were evidence that power in the House has shifted from the committee chairmen to the Democratic Caucus and, by extension, the full House. The vote to kill the F-111 was substantial, 230 to 164, and a clear statement that House members were no longer enthralled with Mahon's control of the money for projects back home. Indeed, the chairman was being told, in effect, that he must now use the purse power more temperately or risk being removed when the 95th Congress convenes two years hence. Similarly, the F-111 vote may also be read as an implicit warning to the chairmen of the two armed services committees that majorities in the House and Senate are prepared and (most important) *inclined* to cut the

Pentagon's budget, item by item if necessary, should the committees fail to make the hard choices themselves.

As a practical matter, the floor of the House and Senate is not the best place to trim or eliminate individual items in the Pentagon's budget. That is properly the work of the armed services committees because they have the technical expertise to determine which programs should be supported and which should not. What has been missing from these committees, however, has been the will to make such hard decisions, and as a consequence the two panels have been little more than rubber stamps for the military. Runaway majorities, should they develop in the House and Senate, would be considerably less discriminating in cutting the defense budget because the will to retrench would probably not be matched by expertise.

A sensible course of action would be for the membership of the two chambers to hold their committees accountable for an in-depth inquiry into the Defense Department's rationale for its $105 billion budget. In the past the committees have done little more than com-

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pile thousands of pages of testimony. What is needed now is nothing less than a thorough analysis of individual programs as well as trends in the Pentagon's budget. While it would not be realistic to expect most members of Congress to become intimately familiar with the details of dozens of major weapons programs, they can carefully scrutinize the principal trends in the budget and determine if they are justified. Such determinations, after all, require as much political as analytical judgment. Two trends in this budget which deserve particularly close scrutiny are strategic weapons initiatives and the substantial increase in conventional forces.

The funds for research and development of a new ICBM, maneuverable warheads and air- and sea-launched cruise missiles are modest by Pentagon standards; but as Schlesinger pointed out in his confirmation hearings two years ago, "one has to have countervailing pressures to prevent the enthusiasms of people in development from leading into high-cost programs which serve relatively limited strategic objectives for the United States." Yet, it is Schlesinger himself who seems most eager to develop new, highly accurate nuclear weapons. He now talks about creating "selective nuclear options" but neither articulates the scenarios he has in mind nor explains what important capabilities these new weapons would have that present ones do not. If the United States were to mass-produce such weapons, their cost ($20 to $30 billion) would be great, their military utility marginal and they could lead the Soviet Union to conclude that we are trying to develop the highly accurate sorts of weapons necessary for a first strike. A new and tremendously expensive arms race might well be the result.

In one of the most thoughtful speeches ever given on the subject, Senator Thomas McIntyre (D, N.H.) warned last year that we must "exercise greater selectivity in our military R & D . . . because a program once initiated becomes most difficult to stop or substantially alter. It picks up momentum with each step in the R & D cycle. A service, or elements within a service, develop vested interests in programs deriving from R & D beginnings. . . . This momentum moves programs into the more expensive stages of the development cycle, perhaps even to procurement, with a power unrelated to the program's merits."

This rush to production has been evident in the Pentagon's two major strategic programs: the Trident ballistic-missile submarine and B-1 bomber. The oldest of the 41 Polaris submarines is 15 years old; the newest eight. Schlesinger believes "these submarines can be operated safely and effectively through their 20th year of service and possibly longer," but some knowledgeable experts suggest 25 or 30 years a more reasonable projection. If they are right, the Trident program is five to ten years premature. Because Trident I missiles can be used aboard the 31 newest Polaris boats, their greater range could be utilized without the new submarine. Although Congress has authorized production of the first three Tridents, it would not be too late to reassess that program should the service life of the Polaris fleet be determined to be considerably greater than the 20-year figure Schlesinger has been loosely wielding.

The B-1 bomber is being built on a "fly-before-buy" basis. Under this concept, the Pentagon tests a weapon in nearly operational form before deciding to mass-produce it. Yet the cost of the B-1's development will be at least $3.3 billion just to see if it flies. The more important question, do we need a new bomber?, has not been examined by Congress, but it must be *this year* because the Pentagon is including $108 million for "long-lead production" items in its nearly billion-dollar request for the B-1. Even if the plane performs perfectly, it would represent only a marginal improvement over the present bomber force of B-52s and FB-111s. The original planning estimate for a 241-plane fleet of B-1s was $9 billion; it is now $21 billion and climbing. Is a marginally better bomber worth so high a price?

Conventional Forces

The budget also calls for a substantial increase in conventional forces at a time when most Americans have come to realize how very limited are the uses to which those forces may be put. They could no more achieve "peace with honor" in Southeast Asia than they could dissuade the OPEC nations from gouging the West with high oil prices. The domestic political climate is openly hostile to the notion that the United States must police the world. Indeed, even Schlesinger admits that "we could not hope to create and sustain the military establishment necessary to stand guard throughout this turbulent world, nor could we command the resources to defend on all fronts simultaneously." We must limit our objectives, and he suggests that the United States "should be able to deal simultaneously with one major attack and one lesser contingency." In other words, Pentagon planning is predicated on the possibility of having to fight one-and-a-half wars whereas a few years ago the force structure was geared to two-and-a-half wars. Yet in spite of what would seem to be a retrenchment, the request for "general purpose forces" has risen from $28 billion last year to $36 billion.

This rise cannot be attributed to inflation alone: it represents a deliberate decision to increase America's conventional military forces at a time when our military commitments are diminishing. "The major contingencies that we consider for force planning purposes," says the secretary, "are attacks in Central Europe and Northeast Asia although we do not ignore such areas as the Middle East." These areas have traditionally been associated with the United States, and any increase in the

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forces required to defend them ought logically be based on some increase in the putative "threat." Yet Schlesinger says his five-year projection of the defense budget assumes "a world situation essentially unchanged from today, with the Soviet Union continuing the expansion of its present military establishment while remaining at odds with the People's Republic of China." In short, he expects the threat to remain "essentially unchanged."

The army would increase from 13 to 16 active divisions largely by reducing support troops. Because headquarters and staffs have long been overmanned to the detriment of combat units, an increase in the so-called "teeth-to-tail" ratio is overdue. But if 13 divisions have been adequate to meet our military requirements, why do we now need 16? Why not simply demobilize unnecessary forces to the extent possible and save the reduced personnel costs?

Tactical air forces, Schlesinger points out, "are the most expensive components of the general forces in terms of investment costs, and the cost per unit, even after adjusting for inflation, is steadily rising." The Pentagon wants about $6 billion this year to continue buying aircraft such as the F-14 and F-15. The navy wants to increase from 334 to 390 the number of F-14s it would buy at a cost of $18 million a copy; the air force wants 729 F-15s at $15 million each. Yet a recent air force study shows that the less costly F-16 (about $7 million each) is superior to the F-15 in most performance characteristics. The navy is also developing a less costly fighter. So, before Congress agrees to buy the numbers of F-15s and F-15s the services have asked for, it ought to determine if a less costly "high-low mix" would be adequate. If so, several billion dollars could be saved.

Compared to most of his predecessors, Schlesinger has been candid in presenting his defense budget. Yet in two vital areas, strategic weapons initiatives and the increase in conventional forces, he has been vague about the reasoning which led to such large investments in these programs. That he is not content with the military status quo is clear; what he has not done, however, is make a compelling case for enlarging American forces and indicate what objectives they could achieve that present levels of forces could not. He speaks about the importance of foreign "perceptions" of America's commitments but does not explain, for example, how his plan to send two additional army brigades to Europe would materially affect how the Soviet Union or our allies assess our relationship to Europe. Because the American garrison in Europe resembles a string of suburban housing developments more than a military bivouac, a strong argument can be made for a smaller, combat-oriented deployment. Yet Schlesinger dismisses any discussion of partial troop withdrawals with remarks such as: "It is useless for the sheep to pass resolutions in favor of vegetarianism while the wolf remains of a different persuasion."

Budgets bespeak intentions more powerfully than words, and the willingness of the public and its representatives to spend tax dollars and borrow billions more against the credit of the United States will certainly affect how other nations perceive our foreign commitments. But does it make sense to spend $21 billion for a fleet of B-1 bombers when the present force of B-52s and FB-111s could be flying well into the next century? Why build ten Trident submarines at a cost of $16 billion when the longevity of the Polaris fleet has yet to be determined? Should the United States commit $7 billion to the F-14 and $11 billion to the F-15 programs when aircraft not nearly so expensive would be adequate, or even better, for tactical air missions?

The armed services committees have the expertise to answer these and many related questions raised by the trends in the Pentagon's budget. If the panels will not address them, however, the full membership of the House and Senate may. Schlesinger believes "the United States can afford both increased social programs and an adequate posture of defense"; yet the budget calls for increases in guns as well as butter at a time when the nation cannot, apparently, afford to spend more money for both. Because the Ford administration has not faced up to the hard choices in the defense budget, the task falls to Congress.

BARBARA FRIEND

KEEPING MY BROTHER

Grief chooses a time
here in the laundramat.
Not the scene of the crime,

this abysmal watering hole
where drab women
ponder the ephemeral.

Thirty years late
an alien sorrow wets my face
to fall amid greying sheets,

tabloids, grim dogs,
the staleness of poverty;
I go on sorting socks.

In from the canning factory
four tiny Spanish men
like sparrows on a wire

stop chittering to stare,
as if the plaster virgin
had bled a single tear.

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STAND-OFF IN THE MIDDLE EAST

JAMES O'GARA

Report on a trip to five troubled countries

In the Holy Land, as I found on a recent trip there, the present crowds in hard on the sacred past. Thus our guide pointed out Jacob's Well, where Jesus met the Samaritan woman; not far away is the village where Robert Kennedy's assassin, Sirhan Sirhan, was born. While I was there I traveled on the road to Galilee where Jesus walked; alongside could still be seen the shattered hulks of Jordanian tanks, rusted reminders of the Israeli victory in the Six-Day War of 1967. One is surrounded by the stuff of biblical history, but the here-and-now intrudes and it is difficult to keep a long-range perspective.

The Middle Eastern trip I was on was a 2½-week working expedition with a dozen other Catholic editors, a journey taken under the auspices of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, whose national secretary, Monsignor John G. Nolan, is also the president of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine. Both groups have for years done much charitable work in the area, and their sponsorship opened doors for us in country after country. We visited Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Israel, working on a packed, early-to-rise-late-to-bed schedule. In each country we had extended, highly informative question-and-answer sessions with key political figures: the Prime Minister of Egypt, the President of Lebanon (incredibly, his first press interview in 4½ years), the Deputy Foreign Minister of Syria (who confirmed his nation's hard-nosed reputation), King Hussein of Jordan, and the President and the Premier of Israel.

In between the top-level interviews we met and had lengthy give-and-take sessions with a wide variety of others: with spokesmen for the Palestinian Liberation Organization, in and out of the refugee camps; with representatives of the Arab League; with information ministers of the various countries; with assorted religious dignitaries, from Pope Chenouda, the Patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Christians in Cairo, through the Moslem Grand Mufti of Lebanon and the Catholic Bishop of Jordan to the Apostolic Delegate in Jerusalem; with a select group of Jordanian Senators; with the American Ambassador in Lebanon and several UN spokesmen; and, constantly, with dozens of unofficial, representative private citizens in every country we visited.

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The arrangers of our visit thought of everything except the toll our daily schedule would take of the human condition, but if the trip was exhausting, it was also eminently worthwhile. Everywhere we went we were treated with the Middle East's traditional hospitality. Thus each time we sat down for an interview, coffee, tea or soft drinks were first formally dispensed all round, in a context in which to refuse would have been rudeness, and by the end of a long day there was among us a considerable tendency toward waterlogging. Apparently our arrival in a body and our red-carpet reception made us news: in each country impossibly stiff and crowded group pictures of us appeared, often on the front page, and at every official interview TV cameramen would appear and pan solemnly around the room; that night an always-exactly-the-same finished product would appear on the local news. To which there was only one possible conclusion, as one of my companions pointed out: Middle Eastern television must without question be the dullest in the world.

As far as the Church is concerned, some things in the Middle East put me off: the rivalry between the competing religious groups over prerogatives in the holy places, for example, struck me as scandalous, even though I had been forewarned; so too what seemed a basic unconcern by some churchmen as to whether or not Melkite Archbishop Capucci was in fact guilty of gun-running (under cover of a Vatican diplomatic passport) for which he had been convicted by an Israeli court, in favor of insistence that as an archbishop he should have been tried by an ecclesiastical rather than a civil court. But other things left me enthusiastic: Franciscan sisters from England leading totally dedicated lives as they provided medical care for thousands of Arabs; an English priest who came out years ago and got so involved in caring for Arab waifs that he never went home; Italian sisters teaching deaf-and-dumb children, virgins far from home mothering scores of obviously loved and loving children; a half-dozen of Mother Teresa's Indian sisters, ministering to the poorest of the Arab poor; a Mass sung by German priests at the site of the Annunciation, beautifully done in a way we never hear in the United States, alas. The good far outweighed the bad.

The Arab states are plagued by problems, and Egypt, where we went first, is a good example of some of the

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more crucial of these. It is, first of all, the area's greatest and oldest nation-state; with a population of 37 million, it is the only Arab country able to move independently on policy issues, the only Arab state strong enough in terms of size and people and in military terms to make war or peace alone with Israel. Hence Mr. Kissinger's choice of Egypt for his shuttle diplomatic efforts.

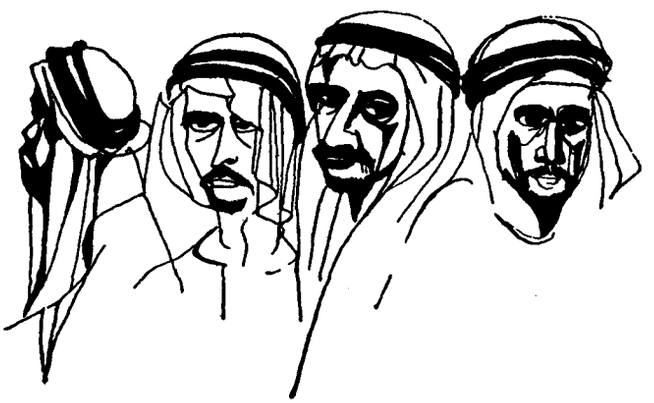
Yet Egypt does not have vast wealth like Saudi Arabia and is actually in serious financial difficulties. For this the 27-year-old conflict with Israel is a major cause. Since 1967 alone Egypt has spent $25 billion for military purposes. Other and wealthier Arab states helped with only a fraction of this, to Egypt, immense cost. In Egypt the race is between economic development and population growth, and so far population is winning—a fact easily grasped in Cairo, which has a population of 7 million, about twice that which it could decently support. Cairo streets are constantly crowded, from morning to night; as a result Cairo cabbies drive as madly as their counterparts in Rome, with one addition: they never take their hands off the horn, and a ride through Cairo's crowded streets is a shattering experience.

With the United States as Israel's big arms supplier, Egypt for years depended for its arms on the Soviet Union. Recently, however, President Anwar el-Sadat expelled the large Soviet military mission—the members of which were reportedly very unpopular with the Egyptian people—and the USSR is now holding back on its aid. No one is quite sure of the exact significance of this state of affairs; some argue that when Sadat in a sense turned toward peace he was in fact also turning toward the technologically-advanced United States for future assistance. In this connection some Egyptian officials stress that Egypt is largely made up of believers, mostly Moslems; there will thus be no threat of Communism in their country, they say. But Moscow does not like being squeezed out of the picture, and the Russians will make trouble for Sadat if they can.

One thing is sure, despite Jewish demurrers: in the general Middle Eastern cast of characters, Egypt's Sadat is at this stage the moderate, a skilled conciliator of conflicting domestic and foreign forces. It seems clear that he at least accepts Israel as a permanent part of the Middle Eastern scene. His Prime Minister described two points which he called essential for peace; we were to hear them repeated over and over again throughout the course of the trip: Israel must obey UN resolutions 242 and 338 and withdraw from occupied Arab lands, and Israel must recognize the rights of the Palestinian people. But Egypt, he assured us, has no desire to drive Israel into the sea. This last point, I should note, was echoed by Arab leaders throughout our visit. It is difficult to know how much weight to attach to such statements. On the one hand, at some point people in the area have to start believing each other. On the other, a wise and experienced Christian Arab told us that no Arab leader in his heart of hearts was really reconciled to Israel's continued existence. In the end I suppose we must look to deeds rather than words on this score.

What specifically can one say on this point with reference to Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organization? This is a hard question, and I doubt that anyone —including Arafat himself—can be completely sure about the answer.

The problem of the Palestinian people is at the heart of the Middle Eastern question, and no solution in this area is possible without their inclusion and agreement. These are the people who once lived on much of the land now occupied by Israel. Out of a total Palestinian population of some 3 million, more than a million still live in Israeli-occupied territories of the West Bank of the Jordan and in Gaza, while something less than another half-million live inside the pre-1967 borders of the state of Israel. Exact refugee figures are hard to arrive at, given different definitions of the term, but about three-quarters of a million are still in refugee camps under UN auspices. The rest of the Palestinians are scattered, living and working throughout much of the



Arab world from Jordan to Saudi Arabia. Except in Jordan, Palestinians are not eligible for citizenship in the other Arab countries, and they say they do not mind; to accept other citizenship would seem to say that they are giving up on achieving a nation of their own, and this they will never do.

The Palestinians are an attractive people to Westerners. Their desire for a national state of their own is intense, and in this they reminded me of the Irish. But in other respects they are, ironically enough, very like the Jews: they are intelligent, articulate, high achievers, on the average much better educated than their fellow-Arabs, and they tend to be very successful, given half a chance. Indeed, if the overwhelmingly approved November resolution of the UN General Assembly becomes a fact and a Palestinian state is created in the now-occupied territories, and if a mass return to it then takes place—two sizable ifs—some Arab countries will miss the Palestinians sorely.

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Without the creation of such a Palestinian state, within mutually agreed borders, no Middle Eastern settlement is possible. I was convinced of this before I went on this trip, on the basis of evidence supplied by others; I returned more convinced than ever. This is true for two major reasons: first of all, the determination of the Palestinians themselves. They differ among themselves on many points but on the need for their own state they are absolutely adamant. Secondly, the problem will not lessen and eventually wither away; on the contrary, it will get worse because the younger Palestinians are even more militant than their fathers. Not all Palestinians would go home by any means, especially those who are more successful where they are, but all want the *right*. They will keep the Middle East on the boil till their claims to a homeland are recognized.

The Palestinians have demonstrated that they are willing to fight to win back their land; what the Israelis call terrorists the Palestinians call freedom fighters. The umbrella organization of this guerrilla movement is the Palestinian Liberation Organization, headed by Yasir Arafat. The PLO is recognized by the nations of the Arab League as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; it is the closest thing they have to a government in exile, complete with its own army, and they treat it accordingly.

This is not to say that Palestinian opinion on PLO strategy is unanimous—far from it. Palestinian leaders are divided among themselves, and the PLO represents an uneasy coalition of forces. Naturally, Israelis who even refuse to consider Egypt's Sadat a moderate totally refuse to consider Arafat in any such light; nevertheless, to realize how relative the term is, one has only to consider George Habash, the head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine: this Marxist-oriented guerrilla leader with a Christian background makes Arafat look moderate, espousing sheer terror tactics and openly seeking a new Arab-Israeli war; the existence of such militancy often makes things very difficult for Arafat with extremists within his own organization.

In Israel shortly before we got there Senator George McGovern told a news conference that peace in the Middle East could not be achieved unless there was "an independent national homeland" for the Palestinians. This took some political courage, for at this point an independent Palestinian state means Arafat and the PLO, and Israeli officials freeze when they are mentioned, refusing even to consider conversations with them. Basically, what bothers the Israelis is this question: would an Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders to permit the creation of a Palestinian state only begin a new phase of agitation and crisis? Most Israeli leaders think the answer to this question is yes, and Arafat himself is ambiguous, speaking at one moment of pragmatic compromise involving a limited-area Palestinian state and at the next moment of a long-range dream of a secular, pluralistic state so attractive that Israel would spontaneously change its present basic character.

Israelis particularly resent any suggestion that the PLO is not so very different from Jewish underground forces in the days of the British mandate (the spokesman for Israeli Premier Rabin's conservative opposition, Menahem Begin, was in the old days himself a leader of the guerrilla force known as Irgun Zval Leumi). The Jewish underground, they say, waged war on soldiers and military targets; the PLO guerrillas murder women and children. Some in Israel think Arafat should be recognized and that conversations with him should take place, but they are very definitely in the minority; if this is ever to happen, the United States will have to give a stronger lead in this direction than it has yet.

It is generally said that Arafat did not dare discard his assertedly empty holster at his recent UN appearance lest the younger militants in the PLO think he had abandoned them entirely in favor of the paths of diplomacy. After visiting Palestinian camps and talking with various PLO spokesmen, I suspect this is true. Arafat is no St. Francis, by any means. His own particular guerrilla organization within the PLO has raided and killed inside Israel with little discrimination; the latest occasion was the raid on the Tel Aviv hotel during Mr. Kissinger's mission, just as a warning to the Secretary and Egypt's Sadat that the PLO would resist any separate Egyptian-Israeli peace. But official spokesmen assured us that the top leadership of the PLO condemned random terrorism outside of Israel, and it is apparently a fact that some who have engaged in such action are in PLO prisons right now. Arafat and his colleagues presently at the top of the PLO would undoubtedly be tough to negotiate with, but if they fail, their successors will be well nigh impossible.

At one point the Israelis believed that with the passage of time the Palestinians would be absorbed by the other Arab states and would gradually forget about their desire for nationhood. This has emphatically not happened, and the presence of the Palestinians throughout the Arab world constitutes strong pressure on the various governments away from accommodation and peace with Israel and toward constant bellicosity and war. Lebanon provides an extreme example of what the presence of the Palestinians can mean.

Lebanon is a state delicately poised on the knife edge of religious pluralism. At one point it was almost equally divided between Moslems and Christians, and government posts are still allotted accordingly. Thus the President, whom we talked to, is always a Christian; the Premier always a Moslem, and so on. Recently tension between the two communities has grown, based partly on the Christian community's emphasis on the country's original Phoenician, non-Islamic character but even

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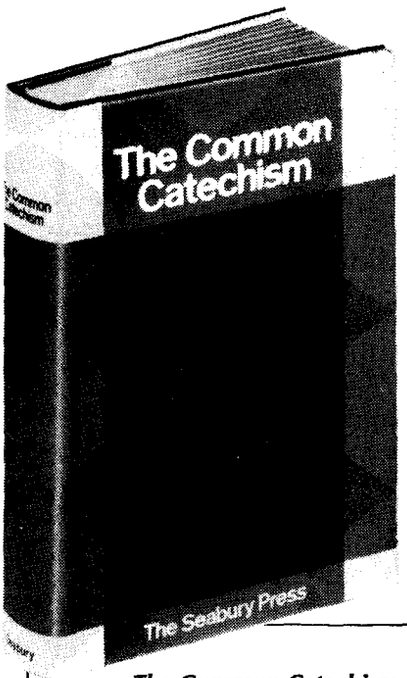

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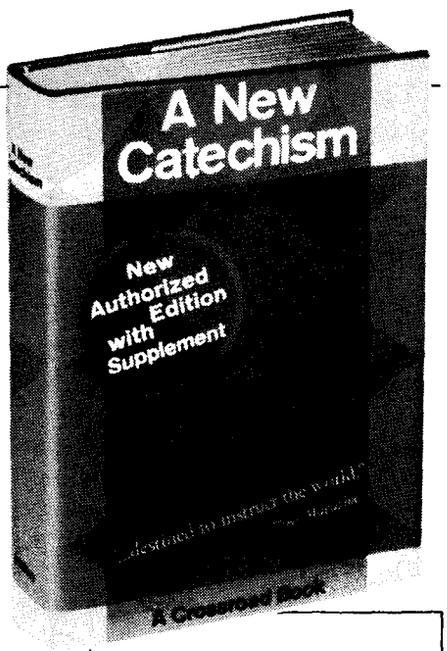

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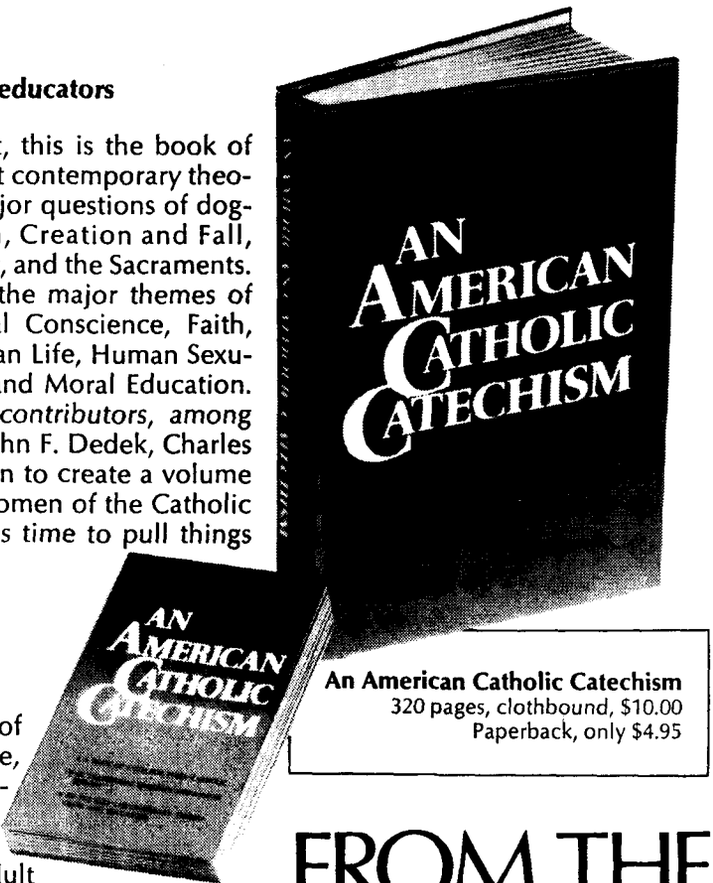

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more on the Moslem suspicion that they now outnumber the Christians. The resulting friction is exacerbated by the presence of 300,000 mostly Moslem Palestinian refugees, who in their camps operate as a state within a state, controlling their own areas, stopping cars on the highways for security checks and the like. In Lebanon the Palestinian commandos substantially outnumber the regular army and are completely beyond Lebanese control; they raid over the border into Israel, thus provoking Israeli retaliatory raids, hardly to the joy of the Lebanese.

I had seen reports of growing Moslem-Christian tensions and asked the Lebanese President about them. Not surprisingly, he tended to belittle them. The Lebanese would, he assured me, solve them the Lebanese way, by conciliation and compromise. A few days after we left bitter fighting broke out in the streets of Beirut between Palestinians and the right-wing Phalangists, a nationalist Christian group whose leader we had previously talked to. Before an uneasy truce was achieved a few days later, over three hundred were dead and hundreds more were wounded. So much for conciliation and compromise.

Of all the national leaders we talked to, King Hussein of Jordan was clearly the most pessimistic. An attractive, energetic and youthful-looking man, he made a good impression on the group but we left depressed. After Egypt's moderate efforts through Secretary Kissinger failed, he asked, how will it be possible to solve the Middle East's problems in the larger cockpit of Geneva?

For Hussein also the Palestinian question is the heart of the problem, and small wonder. In Jordan too the refugees tried to operate as a state within a state, and in 1970 Hussein was driven to strike back, in a move the Palestinians call Black September and have never forgiven; the fighting was fierce and before it was over Syrian tanks in force invaded Jordan in support of the Palestinian guerrillas. In the end Hussein won, but casualties on both sides were heavy, the scars are still there, and the King lives under constant threat of assassination. Add to this the very nature of the proposed Palestinian state, commonly envisaged as made up of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank of the Jordan, which was once Hussein's and which he had ambitions to regain. If he is pessimistic, he has reason.

At the moment, of course, all talk of a Palestinian state is purely theoretical. Israel is firmly in control of these once-Arab lands, and if it has any intentions of giving them back in the near future, I saw no signs of it, while I did see considerable Israeli construction work in occupied areas. When we interviewed the President of Israel, he stressed his country's desire for peace and the heavy burden placed on Israel by military preparedness (Israelis are the most heavily taxed people in the world, with 56 percent of the nation's income going to the national treasury through taxes and compulsory loans). Nonetheless, he said he did not want to hide the underlying Israeli suspicion, the great fear, that Israel's neighbors do not accept it as a permanent state. All in Israel sympathize with the Palestinian refugees, he emphasized, even though it was Israel which was first attacked after partition in 1948. Theoretically Palestinians should be allowed back, but hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Arab countries now live where they came from. In any case the PLO is a terrorist organization, its program is impossible, and there is no way Israel can easily withdraw, he said, because of the constant danger to its national security.

Moslems and Christians throughout the Middle East expressed great concern over Jerusalem, which is sacred to all three faiths, but the President and later other Israeli officials claim to perceive no great issue, seeing what they envision as almost complete autonomy for the shrines as the answer to any problem. As for Pope Paul, he no longer speaks of internationalization which

nobody seems to want; Rome apparently would be satisfied with some kind of special status for Jerusalem with international guarantees of free access to the holy places.

At the moment the great Christian concern about Jerusalem is the fear that the holy places will become museums rather than centers of living faith, and the source of this concern is the gradual exodus of Arab Christians from the area, some say under Israeli pressure. Most young Arabs who want higher education, for example, have to leave the country, and many do not return. It was to help meet this problem that Bethlehem University was recently founded by the Christian Brothers, but it is small and only nibbles at the edges of the problem. The most sensible comment on the matter that I heard came from the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem: "Peace," he said, "is the only real answer to the exodus of Christians."

When we interviewed Israel's Premier Yitzhak Rabin he, like the President, took a firm line on the Arabs in general and the PLO in particular, in a session that lasted almost an hour and a half. The Jews were originally willing to accept partition, he said; the Arabs were not and the resulting violence created the first

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refugees. Israel wants peace but must have a peace that gives security. The essence of the PLO philosophy as he sees it is that the Jews are not entitled to have self-determination and their own state. The PLO wants the West Bank and Gaza, but it will not be satisfied with that.

As Premier Rabin sees it, Israel can win 20 wars without threatening the survival of the Arab countries; if it loses one, however, it is finished. Israel cannot run that risk. As for international guarantees, which the U.S. has talked about and which the USSR recently suggested, he thinks they have never worked and would not work now. Each nation, he said, perhaps with Vietnam in mind, must be able to defend itself, regardless of the guarantees of its great friends. Negotiation with the PLO was out of the question.

What we have, then, is a stand-off. The Middle East simply does not offer a neat ethics textbook kind of case; rights and wrongs are inextricably mixed in a historical mish-mash, and the situation in the area probably represents the most tangled can of worms on the international scene. It certainly defies easy moral analysis. In November of 1973 the Bishops of the United States Catholic Conference wrestled with the problem. Two of the points they called for:

"1. Recognition of the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state with secure boundaries;

"2. Recognition of the rights of the Palestinian Arabs, especially the refugees: this involves, in our view, inclusion of them as partners in any negotiations, acceptance of their right to a state and compensation for past losses to be paid not only by Israel but also by other members of the international community responsible for the 1948 partition plan."

Exactly—recognition of two balancing claims to rights. But what do you do if the two rights turn out to be mutually exclusive, at least in the eyes of the contesting parties?

What you do, if you are in the United States, in my view, is to sigh and continue to urge on all parties the need for peace. At this point, what else is possible? After my return from the area, I talked to a very knowledgeable journalist about the matter. We have to face the fact, he said after a long discussion, that some problems are simply insoluble, and this is one of them. He may very well be right.

Since the termination of Secretary Kissinger's most recent attempt at shuttle diplomacy, much has been written about who was to blame for its failure. Washington seems to blame Israel. Sadat certainly does, while Premier Rabin flatly told us it was Egypt's fault. Most of the discussion ignores the underlying political realities on both sides. Before the talks collapsed, Syria and the PLO, egged on by the USSR, were already organizing Arab opinion against Sadat for going as far as he did in the way of compromise. As for Israel, people forget that Premier Rabin's chief critics are more, not less, hawk-like than he, and this includes the minority religious parties that support his coalition.

The Palestinians we talked to always insisted that they were not anti-Semitic ("we too are Semites") but anti-Zionist; the law of return which grants automatic Israeli citizenship to any Jew from any country who "returns" to Israel inevitably means an expansionist policy for Israel, they said. That they had an arguing point was illustrated shortly before we arrived in Israel when 20,000 Israelis gathered on the site of Samaria, an ancient Judean capital on the West Bank of the Jordan river. The purpose of the protestors was to dramatize their call for additional Jewish settlements in the Israeli-occupied region, an area which would theoretically be part of the new Palestinian state, and they had walked 20 miles to demonstrate "that the West Bank is within walking distance of the heart of Israel." Most of the would-be settlers were Orthodox Jews who believe that they have a historical and religious duty to settle the whole biblical land of Israel. As one put it, "Rabin would not last a day if he tried to withdraw from the West Bank."

The prospects for peace soon, then, are not bright. Unless Mr. Kissinger can persuade either party to yield further, which is possible but unlikely, we will all go to Geneva, with the USSR back in the picture. A failure there would greatly increase the chances of war. Apparently the conventional wisdom in Washington at the moment is that Israel will fare worse at Geneva than in Mr. Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy. Many Israelis, however—doves as well as hawks—do not agree. They are convinced that Israel will do better seeking an overall peace settlement with the Arab nations as a group than in bargaining away advantage after advantage for partial solutions with individual Arab countries.

Meanwhile, what should the U.S. posture be? For friends of the Arabs and the Israelis alike the first thing to note is that the present state of armed truce, with an outbreak of war eminently possible, is preventing the peaceful development of the whole region. The need for heavy arms spending is keeping both sides impoverished. Supposedly the Ford administration is in the midst of a "reassessment" of our Middle Eastern policy, and it is currently holding up Israel's request for arms and economic aid. I see nothing wrong with this, if it is part of an even-handed policy. Simultaneously, much is being said of the need for Israel to take new initiatives, new steps to break the diplomatic logjam, possibly including withdrawal from the occupied lands and negotiations with Arafat and the PLO. I am convinced that fresh initiatives are essential, and I see no harm at all in promoting such an approach as a matter of official policy.

Despite the fears of some American Jews, I do not think any newly emerging U.S. policy will represent a threat to Israel. Ultimately, it is still true that Israel can

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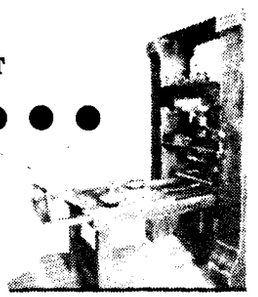
be understood only in terms of the Holocaust, in which six million Jews died in the heart of Christian Europe while the West closed its eyes and its doors—a fact which was determinative in the later creation of Israel by the United Nations. Israelis and American Jews alike fear an "erosion of memory" on this point, but I cannot believe that this will happen, oil or no. U.S. citizens are and will remain sympathetic to Palestinian claims, I think, but Israel's claim to sheer survival will be paramount.

American Jews and Israelis alike should be conscious that in the long run time is on the side of the Arabs. There are over 100 million Arabs as compared with only 3½ million Israelis; Egypt alone has ten times the population of Israel. As time goes by, the Arab countries will inevitably approach Israel in technological and industrial development, and the military result could be a disaster if a framework of lasting peace in the area is not created now. It is for this reason that many foreign-policy commentators say that risks must now be taken for peace, and I agree completely. Indeed, a case can be made that Israel up to now has been far more brilliant militarily than diplomatically. Nonetheless, when one argues for the necessity of risk-taking, as I do, there is one thing we should never forget: it is not we but the Israelis who take the risks.

WRITING SAIGON'S OBIT

PRESS



An odd thing happened back in 1965, when Lyndon Johnson started to ship American combat troops to Vietnam: the American press stopped writing about Vietnam. They went on writing about the war, of course, but they wrote about it as an American conflict, as if the contest were between Hanoi and the Vietcong on one side, and the Americans on the other. Hanoi saw it that way and so, apparently, did Lyndon Johnson, and perhaps, in truth, that was all there was to it. Perhaps the various governments of Saigon were only U.S. puppet regimes with no true Vietnamese identity or legitimacy. I'm not sure exactly what I think about that. But in any event, it is clear that in 1965 the American press stopped writing about Vietnam.

This indifference to the reality of Vietnam went deep. Very few American reporters ever learned to speak Vietnamese. No American ambassador ever spoke the language. It was even unusual for Foreign Service officers, or economic and military advisors, to speak Vietnamese. The CIA's expert on the Vietcong never learned Vietnamese, despite the fact that he spent nine years studying them. The best book about Vietnam—indeed, almost the only American book about Vietnam—was *The Fire in the Lake* by Frances Fitzgerald, and not even she spoke Vietnamese, although she did speak French. Americans wrote almost exclusively about the American involvement and now that the war is finally over the inevitable *post mortems* which have begun to appear all attempt to analyze the American failure, as if the Vietnamese were only witnesses to the 30-year struggle in which they, after all, were the principal victims.

I suppose self-absorption of this sort is characteristic of every country, but it leads to a journalism which is weirdly skewed. Stories of little importance receive major coverage while larger events are neglected. The baby-lift, for example, a side issue if there ever was one, got more front-page headlines in the *New York Post* than the fall of Phnom Penh. I ran across an example of this parochialism recently while working on an article about Haitian refugees. In reading the most recent *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees* I discovered that the UN was trying to look after more than a million refugees in Africa. The flow had been going every which way and yet I had only the dimmest recollection of how there got to be so many uprooted people. The United States was not much involved in these upheavals, so far as we know, and the American press had reflected not the significance of the events themselves, but the limited nature of our involvement.

Parochialism of this sort is at the heart of journalism. I once heard the owner of a weekly paper say that his ideal of coverage would be to get the name of every local resident into every issue of his paper. He failed, naturally, but not by much. In the same way the wire service bureaus in Washington spend most of their time covering stories of interest to individual clients, rather than general stories of interest to everybody, just as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* tended to cover the American involvement in Vietnam rather than Vietnam itself. Of course American pride and self-confidence have been badly bruised by Vietnam and it is natural that the American press should concern itself with our reaction to our failures, but at the same time it is important to understand what happened to the Vietnamese. The danger of myopia now is that it obscures the most important American failure, the one which led to all the others, which was our failure to understand the nature of the political struggle in which we so lightheartedly chose to take sides. The ill-advised creation of a mechanized South Vietnamese Army after the American model, the corruption and inflation which inevitably followed the flood of U.S. dollars into Saigon, the U.S. government's sleight of hand with both the

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Congress and the American public were all major errors but they pale in significance beside the primary and fundamental failure to understand that while military violence can occasionally achieve political ends, it cannot fill a political vacuum.

Not long before he was killed John F. Kennedy, speaking of the Vietnamese people, said that "in the final analysis it is their war. They are the ones who will win it or lose it." A year or two later Johnson echoed this position when he said the struggle was for "the hearts and minds" of the people who live "out there." Both men were right, but neither was willing to follow his own logic to its conclusion. For reasons which had a great deal to do with the United States, and almost nothing to do with Vietnam, American presidents were unwilling to let our side lose. If Vietnam had mattered to this country, if we had cared what happened to its people, I do not think we could have fought the war in the way we did, and I do not think President Ford could have found the heart to ask, only weeks before the final collapse, for more arms and money so that we might prolong the agony a little longer. Because we did not care about Vietnam we did not understand it, and because we did not understand it our intervention achieved nothing but thirty years of useless human suffering. And because we did not care about nor understand Vietnam we are in danger of learning the wrong lesson.

So far, the American people—what George Orwell used to call the Big Public—has absorbed only one clear impression or idea about the war. I hear it everywhere, from cab drivers and bank clerks, from friends who were in the Army as well as those who were not, in one instance from the next table in a restaurant, occasionally even from long-time opponents of the war who ought to know better: the United States fought with one arm tied behind its back. If we had only once just . . . *let go*, if we had brought our full weight to bear, if we had made up our national mind to win, if we had gone all out we would have won.

This notion, which is widely accepted not only by the general public but also, more dangerously, by the military, is absolutely and profoundly incorrect. There is no space here to demonstrate in detail why more of the same, even a lot more, could not have "won" the war. A brief answer would have two parts. First, we did not fight with one arm tied behind our back. Anyone who thinks we did ought to read then-Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's testimony before a Senate Armed Services subcommittee in August, 1967, and the various publications of Project Air War at Cornell University and of the Indochina Research Center in Washington. So far as the level of military violence is concerned we fought very hard indeed. A second, more basic reason is that the obstacles to a victory by our side were not military but political in nature. Military means were not suited to our purpose. A parallel in the United States would be an attempt to end racial animosity in Cairo, Illinois, by bombing the city. We could wreck the place, we could kill all its inhabitants, but we would hardly be likely to make blacks and whites love each other.

Our efforts in Vietnam were of precisely that sort. If we committed crimes of war there it was because we failed to grasp the political nature of the struggle, and fought our opponents just as we fought the armored divisions of Hitler. The free-fire zones, the indiscriminate bombing of the countryside, the substitute of firepower for manpower were all military measures suited to a conventional war, not to a political struggle for the allegiance of a people.

Back in the early 1960s some sensible general—I have forgotten his name—said the ideal weapon in Vietnam was a knife because it was precise. The worst, he said, was a bomb, which would tend to kill friend and foe alike. It was because we failed to understand the political nature of the war or the true source of the enemy's strength that we chose the bomb.

It would be hard to say just when we went wrong in Vietnam, but I think it was in 1945, when we decided to support the French against the Vietnamese people for reasons which had little to do with either. That happened so long ago, and the worst consequences of the error were so long in arriving, that most journalists seem to have forgotten all about it. I suppose it is too late now for the general public to learn anything new about Vietnam, or to unlearn the mistaken idea that we could have won if only we had hit them harder and sooner. And yet, of course, the effort must be made. The journalists who were in Phnom Penh and Saigon at the end will be back in this country soon to write their final stories. It is important that they should try to write not only about the United States, but about Vietnam.

THOMAS POWERS

AN APPEAL—This spring the United States Committee for UNICEF reports that millions of children in poorer countries are threatened with severe malnutrition, "or even starvation." For example, "in many parts of Africa almost every child under 5 suffers from some protein malnutrition. More than half the childhood deaths in Latin America are related to malnutrition. And in rural India 80 percent of pre-school children suffer from dwarfism and stunted growth. . . . For the first time in its 27-year history the United Nations Childrens' Fund has declared a state of emergency for the world's children." As little as $11 will provide enough high protein food supplement to feed 33 malnourished children for a month and $50 can stock ten village fishponds with a local supply of valuable protein. Donations should be sent to U.S. Committee for UNICEF, P.O. Box 3662, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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SNAKES ALIVE!

THE SCREEN

What *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* has in common with *Monty Python's Flying Circus* is the letters M through n, inclusive. ', is naturally excluded. Aside from that these two entertainmentae have nothing in common, or rather—outing the in —nothing common. There are seven persons who appear, when the Monty Python television show is on, on television, and they just happen to be in this movie two (too?). But any resemblance between these seven living or dead is purely coincidental. You can hardly ever tell anyway, since it's never made clear which of the seven is which person, anyway, and on top of that they're half of them playing women half the time, as well as men, which makes it just about impossible.

So there you are. The main way you know these persons are always pretty much the same persons you have seen before when you saw them is by how fast they talk. Could there be another seven like them? They must have all been trained by someone now extinct and unable to go on. Certainly some shared heritage or mutation is indicated. They are, in effect, seven fellows, seven blokes, bods, chaps—in a word (or so): a queer lot. And are they funny? *Are they funny?* Well, sometimes.

A short history of comedy will suffice because things are seldom funny for very long. This is a point these seven sampannai don't appreciate. Never have. As we all know, the key to the secret that unlocks the buried meaning of what makes a funny movie funny is hidden in the password: VISUAL. Movies were always on the lookout for this, from the earliest days. From the screen they would scan the audience all the time, and when they would see something funny happen out there, whether in the loge or the orchestra or the balcony—oh my, how those movies would laugh! It would do your heart good to hear them. But the trick was they had to *see* this funny thing. Visual, visual: that was the big deal for them, because, as we all remember, movies only know a visual language. They don't know nothing else.

What killed the visual in movie comedy was of course radio. That was in 1929. Almost no movie has seen anything funny since then, and great numbers have been unemployed. (101,319, for instance, is a number that hasn't been able to get a full day's work since around that time.) But now Monty Python has restored comedy for movies to its true extent by giving us something that goes beyond even the visual: namely, the risual. Let me make an example of this.

A fellow steps out onto the dance floor to sing a song that his girlfriend has cribbed onto his detachable cuff. But first he does a little break-step to warm up the audience, and in the process the cuff flies right off his arm, thus leaving him to cope with the girlfriend, the cafe owner, who's plenty steamed let me tell you, and two cops who are, unbeknownst to our poor friend, seated right there at ringside ready to nab the girl. Now *that's* risual. The only flaw in it is that it's from *Modern Times* (1936), so Monty Python and these seven yo-yos from England really can't take any credit for it. But I'll see whether I can't think of some example of the risual from their film too.

Meanwhile, you've got to admit that these seven have done pretty well for themselves with this *Holy Grail* business. Sacred and profane, Romantical and Classical, heroical and pathetical, Rowan and Martin: it's got all the really big combos in there, and you can catch it at movie palaces from coast to coast as well as in a run-down little Rank theater (former bingo parlor, reconverted) just off Camberwell Green. The portrait of the French given in the movie is not too complimentary and may cause some minor demonstrations and skirmishing wherever the film is shown. *"C'est lui!"* as the French say (c'est). But then the portrait of the English isn't all that hot either, so those Frogs haven't all that to complain about and can just bug off. If there's anything I can't stand, it's some guy who's dissatisfied all the time when he doesn't even speak the same language. Ruddy foreigners.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

MARY OLIVER

STRIKE

Now they can walk
In the wintry air.
The sky is an unfamiliar field,
The sun a rare metal.

It is something to see, daylight.
But you cannot spend it
Like a paycheck.

At night they dream
Of riding down to the empty
Cars and the pickaxes.
Swinging, they smash

The back wall; from the darkness beyond
They haul out food and new clothes,
Milk, toys, winter shoes.

And the faces of their wives
Grow young again
When they rise—black to the lungs, but
Glowing with the good news.

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A MOST OBEDIENT PROPHET

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM

And without honor in his lifetime

WHEN AN attempt is made to understand the antecedent events and movements that presaged the vast theological and pastoral shifts that took place at the second Vatican Council, Italy is not a place that one normally looks to find such events and movements. It is part of the conventional wisdom that France was the testing ground of almost every new pastoral approach and, along with Belgium and Germany, provided the theological reexaminations that would blossom into the Johannine *aggiornamento*. But it is somewhat simplistic to think of Italy as resting in dogmatic slumber before the Council. The very proximity of the Vatican and the Italian domination of the Curia kept a tighter rein on Italy than most countries and, while attempts, most of them serious and quite fervent, were made to bring the Church out of its intransigent ways in Italy, the naturally conservative and wildly anti-modernistic Curia resisted these attempts with alacrity. A case in point is the life and the career of Don Primo Mazzolari, a Cremonese priest (died 1959) which has been amply chronicled in a new book which became a best seller in Italy: Lorenzo Bedeschi's *Obbedientissimo in Cristo* (Mondadori, 1974).

Don Mazzolari was ordained in 1917 and spent the first years of his priesthood as a military chaplain with the Italian army during the final days of the first World War. The letters that he wrote during this period are not extraordinary. They reflect the simple piety and provincial worldview of an unsophisticated priest of the era: pleasure at the number of his soldiers who went to Mass and Communion; requests for prayer books and medals; satisfaction at having stopped the sale of pornographic postcards at their bivouac. It was only when he left the army and took up his first pastoral duties in the small town of Cicognara that his real education and notoriety began.

Mazzolari's appointment to the parish at Cicognara coincided with the rapid rise of the Fascist party in Italy and the increasing power of the party at local levels of life in the rural areas of the country. Mazzolari had an early, and singularly intuitive, distaste for Fascist politics which thrust him rather rapidly into a long (and exceedingly lonesome) struggle against Fascist attempts to use the Church for its own political advantage. Mazzolari's life from the early Twenties until the very end of the war was marked by his protest against Fascist policies; his refusal to allow the Fascists to use his church for thinly disguised political rallies; and his active cooperation with dissident political and intellectual figures who he hoped would, in time, give new life to Italian politics. He was, for example, one of the few priests who openly spoke out against the Racial Laws of 1939 when—and this fact should never be forgotten—as eminent a cleric as the Franciscan Agostino Gemelli could, in the same year, open the academic year at the University of Bologna with a blatantly racist and anti-Semitic speech.

If the problems of Mazzolari with the Fascist regime were not taxing enough (in the last days of the war he had to go into hiding for fear of imprisonment and/or execution for his part in the Resistance) he was also constantly harassed by Church authorities for his "advanced" religious ideas. His relationship with some of his fellow clerics was always strained because of his political dissent but the correspondence between Mazzolari's bishop and the Holy Office from 1933 until his death is a grim reminder of the obscurantist state of the Roman Curia in the post-modernist years.

Mazzolari did, of course, some rather daring things for a man of his time. He felt that the Church had closed in on itself and needed to be more open to the non-Catholic world about it. He kept up a warm freindship with the few Evangelical pastors in his area. He befriended a priest who had left Orders and even baptized the man's children. He was not only friendly with known socialists (a traditionally anti-clerical group in Italy and hence anathema to Catholics) but was openly sympathetic to some of their ideas. These things would have marked Mazzolari as open but not a threat until he began to publish books calling for a program of openness towards those outside the strict confines of the Church.

In a book written in 1933 (*La Piu Bella Avventura*) Mazzolari criticized the closed mentality of the Church and openly called for dialogue with the secular and dissident world. This book, totally innocent by today's standards, was condemned by the Holy Office, ordered out of circulation, and the bishop of Cremona was ordered not only to monitor any of his future writing but also to watch his preaching and any other public utterance. The interesting thing about the intervention of the Holy Office was that the book was not judged heretical or even erroneous but was censured because of the supposed danger that would come from a book that had been favorably received in Italian Protestant circles and which had received a positive review written by Ernesto Buonaiuti, the noted Church historian who had been excommunicated as a modernist in the era of Pius X. Mazzolari obeyed the Holy

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Office without hesitation but quietly observed to a friend that "they had no right to commit moral homicide in the name of orthodoxy." Had his bishop not written a letter of recommendation and praise for his work as a parish priest the censure might well have been even more severe than it was.

In 1943 the Holy Office again intervened when Mazzolari published a book on the supposed failure of the Church to have a true sense of poverty and evangelical zeal (*Impegno con Cristo*). Spurred on, no doubt, by a bitterly critical review in the authoritative *Civiltá Cattolicá*, the Holy Office ordered the book withdrawn not because it was in error but because of its intemperate manner of expression. Furthermore, the Holy Office wrote, given "his peculiar mentality" Mazzolari was enjoined from writing on any topic analogous to the one he had treated in that book. Again Mazzolari capitulated.

At the end of the war Mazzolari turned his attention to the tumultuous area of cold war politics in Italy. In a short work entitled *Impegni Cristiani —Istanze Communiste* (1946) he argued that Christians in Italy could not afford the luxury of a simple anti-Communism which could so easily mask a naturally conservative desire to preserve class and economic privilege. Mazzolari regarded the Communist success in Italy as confused politics but he also saw that Communism was expressive of a deep anxiety about social life and a symptom of the terrible sufferings of the poorer classes. He called for a "Christian Revolution" that would take heed of what the Communist movement called for and he thought that the aspirations of the Communists were not only deeply human but implicitly Christian. Given the harsh realities of the struggle of the Church with Communism in Italy and its close identification with the Christian Democratic party, this book was greeted with great hostility in Church circles. The result was almost predictable: The Holy Office censured the work and the author was told to take a five-day retreat at a religious house during which time his right to celebrate Mass was suspended.

In the postwar period, and right up until his death in 1959, there were numerous other skirmishes with the Holy Office: In 1951 he was forbidden to preach outside of his diocese because of his connection with the liberal religious review *Adesso* which he had founded; in 1954 he was forbidden to preach outside of his own parish and enjoined from any public utterance on social issues; in 1956 the Holy Office again warned him because he gave an opinion to an interviewer about French politics. Mazzolari died in 1959 but not before he had seen the election of Pope John and had been received cordially in audience. In those last days of his life he saw a glimmer of hope that some of his ideas would be accepted as legitimate or, at the very least, worthy of discussion. But if Pope John was sympathetic, there was still hesitation on the part of the Curia, and the career of Don Mazzolari ended posthumously on a somewhat ironic note. It fairly well summed up the misunderstandings that plagued him all his life.

In 1960 some friends and disciples of Mazzolari formed a committee to do something concrete in order to pay honor to his memory and his work. They decided to underwrite a new edition of his book *La Piu Bella Avventura* which had first been published in 1934. When the Holy Office heard of this plan Cardinal Ottaviani sent a letter to the bishop of Cremona reminding him that the book had been removed from circulation when it first came out and that the original imprimatur was no longer valid. The Holy Office also said that it would not permit a new imprimatur and the bishop was asked to see that the book was not reissued. The bishop, in turn, communicated this information to the committee with a long letter in which he also wrote, supremely unconscious of any irony in his words, that for the committee to obey would be the highest tribute to pay to the deceased priest since it would be so clearly demonstrate "a sincere submission to the Church which is expected of every true Catholic."

The career of Don Mazzolari touched some of the most important events and personages of modern Catholicism in Italy. He was in contact with Fascists and Communists; with the Italian Resistance and the primary figures of resurgent Italian democracy; his correspondence reveals letters to Popes and other senior clerics of the Church. His career was, in a sense, a lonely and misunderstood one. It is only now that he is getting the recognition that he deserves and Bedeschi's sensitive book has served him well. He was, as the title of the book suggests, always most obedient; but, in the words of another prophetic priest of Italy, Don Lorenzo Milani, one may be mute without necessarily being blind.

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JOHN HUMMA

MOTHER'S LIMBS

Arthritis has found a home in her.
Humbled to a shuffle, she doesn't curse
a thing; some Congregationalist strain
in her family tree acquiesces to the lodger.
She even pays the rent.
It anticipates the end, ranges to the roots;
the swollen feet are loaves of lead.
Reluctant, they assert the way is downward,
or stationary, not ahead.
All the tree stiffens against movement,
screams when the juices are made to work harder.
The ground rises upon each step, the leaves
fall toward some consummate meeting, a common ground
where the tenant will have nothing more to do.
They'll stop in silence together.

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MEMOIRS OF A MODERN 'MARTYR'

BERNARD BERGONZI

Memoirs

JOZSEF CARDINAL MINDSZENTY

Macmillan, $10

Once a hero, Cardinal Mindszenty lived long enough to be an embarrassment, not only to the Hungarian Government, which imprisoned him in 1949, but also to the Vatican, which found him an obstacle to its plans for co-existence with the Communist world. If Mindszenty had died in jail, or been executed by the Russians like other Hungarian leaders, following his brief liberty during the revolution of 1956, he would have secured a place in history as a martyr, even a possible candidate for canonization. His subsequent fifteen years of voluntary incarceration inside the American Embassy in Budapest were a long anti-climax, when Mindszenty was neither genuinely in nor out of his own country. During those years the world changed but Mindszenty did not. He continued to uphold unflinchingly, as he did until his death, the defiiant stance he adopted in 1948 at the time of his arrest by Stalin's Hungarian agents; he is totally opposed to Communism, of whatever variety, and does not believe that détente or coexistence can achieve anything worthwhile. In these remarkable memoirs, which are one positive result of his years in the embassy, he argues a persuasive case as well as unfolding a compelling life story. The result is deliberately calculated to displease a good many people, in the Vatican as well as in Hungary.

By 1948 Mindszenty was already an authority on prisons. As a young priest he had been imprisoned for a few weeks in 1919 during Bela Kun's Communist regime. And in 1944, during the final months of the Second World War, he was once more imprisoned, this time by the Hungarian Nazis, following a characteristically sharp letter from Mindszenty to the head of the fascist government, urging that peace be made. When the war ended and Mindszenty was once more at liberty, Pius XII appointed him Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary. Then followed years of struggle against the Communists, who were at first merely one party in the fragile democratic state set up in 1945, but who by familiar methods of subversion, blackmail and open terror were finally able to take over the apparatus of the state. Mindszenty gives a vivid account of the process, every step of which he opposed in pastoral letters and sermons. There is a tense dramatic sense of developing nemesis in Mindszenty's history of the years from 1945 to 1948, which is totally gripping even though one knows the outcome. Mindszenty himself had no doubts about his fate; late in 1948 he issued a statement disowning in advance any subsequent confession of crimes against the state; such a confession could only be extracted under duress. Soon afterwards Mindszenty was arrested and after a show trial he did, in part, confess. At the time in the West it was assumed that this confession, like those of Stalin's other innumerable victims, was extracted by fairly sophisticated methods of brain-washing. In fact, prolonged simple brutality—constant beatings and sleeplessness—combined with drugs was enough to make the victim crack and sign a bogus confession. For a man already in his late fifties Mindszenty was remarkably tough and resilient and resisted his interrogators for several weeks. He needed to be tough in mind and body to survive the years of imprisonment, about which he writes with great objectivity and some humor. As a memorable work of prison literature Mindszenty's *Memoirs* can, as the publishers claim, stand comparison with Koestler and Solzhenitsyn.

> *Even in Hungarian communist prisons things happened that wrenched the heart. In 1949, at the very time that hatred was dominant, an auxiliary policeman slipped into my cell when the others were already asleep, looked around cautiously, and whispered: Father, trust in God! He helps! Later he came to comfort me a second time. The third time he came to bid good-bye, for he was being transferred.*
>
> —Memoirs, P. 172

As a prisoner Mindszenty was clearly an embarrassment to the Communists, and when the Stalin era ended they were ready to grant him a pardon and let him leave the country. But Mindszenty had no intention of asking for a pardon, he expected full rehabilitation and restoration to his post as Primate of Hungary. But this was too much for the Communist government, now dealing with complaisant bishops who were prepared to surrender religious education and the freedom of Catholic institutions—points of which Mindszenty had refused to compromise —in order to preserve some degree of freedom of worship, however circumscribed.

Mindszenty made the same stand during his years in the American Embassy; he left in 1971 only with very great reluctance and following prolonged pressure from Rome. Even then, had he known of a secret undertaking from Rome to Budapest that the Cardinal would do nothing to annoy the Hungarian Government once he left the country, he would certainly not have agreed. Once in the West he refused to be silent, and as a result was treated with considerable duplicity, even shabbiness by the Vatican. Soon after he arrived in Rome he was as-

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sured by the Holy Father, "You are and remain Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary." But two years later, precisely on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his arrest, the Pope told Mindszenty that the seat of Esztergom was now vacant. And on the anniversary of his trial the announcement was made public. But still Mindszenty had the last, defiant word, in a public statement insisting that he had not retired but been sacked. If he wished to hold on to his office it was not out of any personal inclination but as a sign that in Hungary neither church nor nation was free. His book concludes, "This is the path I travelled to the end, and this is how I arrived at complete and total exile."

In a sense, of course, the Vatican was right in wanting to get the best deal possible for the Church in Hungary, however imperfect; indeed, such pragmatic accommodations are a traditional Roman policy. But Mindszenty is, it seems to me, right too in standing unshakably firm on the principles for which he underwent torture and imprisonment. And his is a rarer kind of rightness. At a time when Catholics, like everyone else, are much inclined to the virtues of compromise, pragmatism, accommodation, dialogue, Mindszenty stands out as a figure of immense courage and lonely moral grandeur, defying the world for what he believes to be right. He is, as his book makes clear, an uncomfortably old-fashioned, pre-conciliar Catholic: conservative, clericalist, triumphalist, and manifesting a potent blend of Magyar nationalism and Marian devotion that was not at all to my taste. He is widely read in European literature and philosophy, but the larger implications of, say, Catholic-Marxist dialogue are inaccessible to him, since for very good personal and historical reasons he equates Marxism with Stalinism and its successors. But whatever his rigidities of temperament and limitations of horizon Mindszenty is of the stuff of martyrs; and that quality, even in an updated, progressive, pluralist Catholic Church, is of exemplary and absolute value.

Black Fiction

ROGER ROSENBLATT

Harvard Press, $9.50

Black Autobiography

STEPHEN BUTTERFIELD

U. of Massachusetts Press, $15

NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR.

Roger Rosenblatt, in his account of the kind of story Negro American fictionists have tended to design, and Stephen Butterfield, in his survey of the adjacent terrain of Negro autobiography, have given us two interesting and useful books, and books which may help in some measure to redeem critical discussion of Black writers from its customary commitment to "Agit-Prop" rather than to analytical discrimination.

Indeed, Mr. Rosenblatt's extrusion from his purview of social-historical and political perspectives is so unremitting that books which are in point of fact drenched in the terrors of American history—Wright's *Native Son*, Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, Ellison's *Invisible Man*—are, on his reckoning, often made to appear strangely discarnate with respect to the cultural environment in which they are so deeply rooted. His unstated hermeneutical premise—like that of his forebears in the New Criticism of a generation ago—seems to be that the literary text, as we first encounter it, represents a sort of inert facticity, a sort of self-alienation, from which it can be rescued only as the critic undertakes to unravel that story underneath the story actually recounted by a given fable, the story indeed that it wants most to tell but which it can body forth only with the kind of obstetrical assistance that criticism provides. And —in the manner of a Dorothy Van Ghent or a Reuben Brower—it is this latent, veiled, imperspicuous story in the literature produced by Negro American novelists that Mr. Rosenblatt is after.

He conceives it most essentially to be a story of inversions and transpositions, of contrariety and paradox: it is a story in which people

> . . . behave savagely in order to be considered civilized, rise in order to fall, sin in order to gain salvation, are rewarded for virtue by damnation, assert their presence by disappearing, are old when they are young, act as children in old age, are emancipated so that they may be enslaved, see when they are blind, hate in order to love, die in order to live. . . .

Which is to say that, in Mr. Rosenblatt's account, the world of Weldon Johnson's "ex-colored man" and Wright's Bigger Thomas and Baldwin's John Grimes and Ellison's nameless protagonist is a world of unreason and absurdity—a virtual madhouse that, almost inevitably, calls forth the Gothic tale of terror. It is a world in which time and morality are out of joint, and there is no escaping its infernal cruelties either by way of religion or education or love or any retreat into reversionary primitivism: not even laughter offers a possibility of transcendence. And thus the Black hero is an anti-hero, one who makes no large impression on the human City, who faces an order so hostile as to allow him to leave only the merest trace of his having lived at all, and who is finally so petered out by his struggle for recognition and justice that he simply disappears, descending into something like the oblivion that claims the protagonist of *Invisible Man*—this acquiescence in self-effacement being perhaps the last, the ultimate, gesture of self-assertion.

Mr. Rosenblatt wants his book to be thought of as presenting "a theory of black fiction," but the texts and writers closely studied are too limited in number for any claim so large as this to be taken very seriously. The fiction of William Attaway, Owen Dodson, Julian Mayfield, William Gardner Smith, William Demby, Ishmael Reed, Ronald Fair, and John Williams—to mention only a portion of the material he scants—is discussed not at all. Nor, in dealing with those writers whom he elects to consider, does he always clearly indicate why he chooses to con-

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centrate on certain particular texts of theirs rather than on others that might equally well, and perhaps even more decisively, figure as data for "a theory of black fiction." And thus, though he treats a variety of material—from the period of Paul Laurence Dunbar to that of Ellison—Mr. Rosenblatt's field of study is far too restricted and his reticence about the fundamental presuppositions controlling his inquiry is far too carefully kept for his work to be considered any sort of essay in genuinely systematic "theory."

He has, it is true, an undeniable talent for the kind of *montage* to which the New Criticism gave a great prestige, for the plotting of the story that fictions would tell were they endowed with the dialectical cleverness of Criticism. And, in this mode, he is a superb reader, so gifted that no one who talks henceforth about his material (most especially about Langston Hughes' *Simple* fables) can do so without reference to many of his brilliant insights. Yet, though his rigorous abstinence from any sort of *Geistesgeschichte* may produce the illusion of rigorous aesthetic analysis, the fact of the matter is that his "decoding" procedures work so equally well on materials radically incommensurate in literary substance and he keeps so carefully neutral an "objectivity" in relation to his subject that his analysis, say, of Paul Laurence Dunbar's *The Uncalled* and Ellison's *Invisible Man* is quite uncalculated to support any significant distinction in value as between the two novels—and thus, at last, his book, for all its sophistications, may not advance any more genuinely critical an assessment of the work of Negro writers than the crudest manifestos issued by some exponent of Black Aesthetic.

Mr. Butterfield's book represents a far more "scholarly" undertaking. It presents a thoroughly comprehensive review of Negro American autobiography over a period of nearly a hundred and fifty years, moving from the important slave narratives (of Samuel Ringgold Ward, Henry Bibb, William Wells Brown, John Thompson, Moses Grandy, Frederick Douglass, *et al*) through the time of Booker T. Washington and DuBois and Weldon Johnson into the period of Richard Wright and James Baldwin, of Malcolm X and George Jackson and Eldridge Cleaver. It is, indeed, an immense body of literature that he has scanned: nothing of significance has been neglected, and the book will surely remain the definitive synoptic study of its field for many years to come. It is an essay in historical criticism which offers a wonderfully spacious view of the major shifts and mutations in the development of Negro thought and ideology since the middle years of the nineteenth century. But it is also an essay in literary criticism which brilliantly recounts the various styles of self-definition that representative Negro spokesmen have forged, as they have undertaken within the terms of the autobiographical form to create through the medium of language a selfhood stout enough to withstand the fierce weathers of American culture. And, on both levels, Mr. Butterfield's book is an enormously impressive performance.

Indeed, the two books taken together, Butterfield's and Rosenblatt's, represent a body of funded insight which will henceforth very much require to be drawn upon in any further explorations of this body of writings.

A Month of Sundays

JOHN UPDIKE

Knopf, $6.95

DANIEL MORRISSEY

John Updike is best known for his twin themes of adultery and aging ex-athletes. But this prolific chronicler of American anxiety has also enjoyed setting human affairs in a subtle religious perspective. Updike's description of Harry Angstrom's soaring golf drive in *Rabbit Run* was an ecstatic explanation of human union with God. In "The Deacon," published in *Women, Museums, and Other Pieces*, he played masterfully on the two meanings of "church" using the edifice as a metaphor for the ecclesia. Now with *A Month of Sundays*, Updike's neo-orthodox Christianity comes full-blown out of his literary closet.

The central figure of this blatantly kerygmatic novel is a profligate parson, the Reverend Tom Marshfield. Marshfield has been banished to an unstructured desert retreat house because he has seduced (or has been seduced by) all kinds of women who came to him for spiritual guidance. During this month of enforced recollection Tom spills out graphic details of his fall from (or into) grace in a daily series of written reflections. He intersperses this thirty-one-day memoir with four sermons delivered to his hypothetical reader each Sunday of his exile.

These ramblings quickly disclose that the minister had been living in a faithful, if emotionally sterile, marriage with Jane Chillingworth, the daughter of his seminary ethics professor. As Tom reminisces about their courtship, Updike roars in with paragraphs which parallel Tom and Jane's sexual explorations with her father's lectures on the development of Western moral systems. Since there is no special correspondence, however, between Spinoza and kissing or Kant and caressing a breast through a sweater, this potentially provocative analogy runs its extended course without any real effect.

When the narrative returns to current events Marshfield describes how his family's fifteen years of domestic complacency was disturbed by an earthy fling with the church organist, Alicia Crick. The Alicia episodes, which were published before the entire novel as a self-contained short-story, flesh out the first of Tom's homiletic topics: that adultery is the divinely-

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REVIEWERS

BERNARD BERGONZI, British critic and professor of English at the University of Warwick, is the author of *Hero's Twilight* and, most recently, *The Situation of the Novel* and *T. S. Eliot.*

NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR., is Shailer Mathews Professor of Theology and Literature at the University of Chicago.

DANIEL MORRISSEY is the personal clerk of a federal judge in Chicago.

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Precisely, I worshipped her, adored her flaws as furiously as her perfections, for they were hers; and thus I attained, in the bound of a few spring weeks, a few illicit lays, the attitude which saints bear toward God, . . . that is, of forgiving Him the pain of infants, the inexorability of disease, the wantonness of fortune, the billions of fossilized deaths, the helplessness of the young, the idiocy of the old, the craftsmanship of torturers, the authority of blunderers, the savagery of accident, the unbreatheability of water, and all the other repulsive flecks on the face of Creation.

—A Month of Sundays

sanctioned complement to marriage. Alicia provides the sexual-sacramental goodies which Marshfield's marriage lacks, but he finds no need to concern himself with her future. When Alicia confronts Jane and pushes for a divorce which would ruin his career as a churchman, Marshfield weasels back to his wife.

The ensuing reconciliation is celestially-ordained and final in the short story, but only brief in the novel. Like a clerical Warren Beatty, Marshfield finds himself helpless when alone with women. Exposure and exile inevitably follow, leaving Marshfield in a state of spiritual shock. A good bit of this he can work off at the desert retreat golfing or playing cards with fellow errant clergymen. But it is in his diary where the distraught minister wages a personal armageddon against the gospels of sexual gratification and social activism. There he also ponders the wretched condition of his senile father, like Marshfield a minister, but a disciple of the early twentieth-century liberalism which Tom finds insipid. He also muses about his own two sons, one a disciplined athlete, the other a young hedonist: "A spartan and a sybarite, the trunk stands declared in its forking." Marshfield ultimately wrenches over the emptiness of being a professional do-gooder and the general hostility of the universe.

To cope with these anguishing realities, Marshfield invokes "[a] belief in God which has made my life one long feast of inconvenience and unreason." Tom as much as admits that his escapade with Alicia was sinfully devoid of any real concern for her welfare, but he makes it out to be salvific. Grace, in Tom's Reformed tradition, does not build on nature; it overwhelms it. His outlook is also unabashedly antinomian. Ethics are not important; belief is. To keynote his lyrical closing sermon, Tom summons from memory the language of Christianity's greatest theologian, Paul: "If Christ be not risen, we of all men are most miserable."

Though not everyone of Updike's carefully-turned phrases scores a poetic coup, *A Month of Sundays* is a theological tour de force and a pleasurable, enriching book. As a compendium of Protestant faith, this work fits the Biblical definition; it is Updike's substance of things hoped for, his evidence of things unseen.

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Michael Novak (Cont.)

specific actions or any further specific steps in analysis. These exhortations easily lead to rage against the "system"; they do not indicate how one can master it for oneself or others. They generate free-floating guilts, without producing a vision, a program, a policy, a strategy, or a set of tactics that enable the fifty million American Catholics, whether poor or affluent, to take a realistic step forward. The intention of the booklet is revolutionary; its effect is reactionary. It does not challenge the cultural base of power in America, nor show how Catholics might organize themselves, nor touch the real depths of feelings of injustice among our people. It is an establishment document—more attuned to Harvard than to Charlestown in the North End.

As a stimulant to social action, this document has some good tables on gross inequities in America. But it is out of contact with actual Catholic populations in Queens, Parma, the South Side of Chicago, Lackawanna, and Providence.

Some day soon, Catholic intellectuals will begin to discover Catholic America, and write its accurate description. Getting this straight, they may find they have therein the rudiments of the effective progressive social vision for which the nation longs. Studies of social power, like charity, would do well to begin at home.

Still, I applaud the bishops for supporting this initiative. On this base, better work may now be planned.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 163)

Jewish community to reduce anti-Christianism. None of us in the world we live in today can afford these attitudes, no matter how understandable and how strongly based in history.

ROBERT L. BARD
Visiting Professor of Law
The University of Texas at Austin

South Orange, N.J.

To the Editors: Since I was responsible for the Saint Louis University research of the most widely used Catholic religion textbook materials, I *know* that the findings reported by Claire Huchet Bishop in her recently published book *How Catholics Look At Jews: Inquiries into Italian, Spanish and French Teaching Materials*, parallel those which I found in the American religion texts of *yesterday*. Generally speaking, the books of *today* portray a much more positive picture of Jews and Judaism. One finds in the printed materials today, for example, at least one chapter devoted to an explanation, in reverent tones, of the liturgies of the Jewish People. Teachers' manuals, too, offer suggestions for related materials: books, recordings, films, filmstrips, and various activities. This is not only found in one series but in most series of the newly published Catholic religion books now available.

There are, however, a number of

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serious omissions as Reverend John Pawlikowski noted in his recent article [Jan. 31], namely, a treatment of the Holocaust (the murder of 6,000,000 Jews only because they were Jews) and the State of Israel.

If teachers and students are to be able to implement the Vatican II Statement on the Jews (Oct., 1965) and to carry out the suggestions outlined in the Vatican Guidelines for Implementation of the Conciliar Declaration "Nostra Aetate" (Jan., 1975), then our textbooks and our teaching and preaching must include a discussion of "the Holocaust" and "What the State of Israel Means to Jews." The recent guidelines state: "Christians must . . . strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism; they must strive to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience."

To come to a knowledge of how "Jews define themselves" means that Christians must come to understand the meaning of People, Torah, and Land which is basic to a knowledge of Jews and Judaism. Our religious teachings, therefore, must include these topics.

The filmstrip "Christians and Jews: A Troubled Brotherhood," by Suzanne Noffke, O.P., Ph.D (Alba House Communications) is an excellent teaching tool for all teachers. However, if teachers and preachers do not have the background necessary for implementing the Conciliar Statement on the Jews, they may tend to teach as they have been taught and/or as they have been informed by the books of yesterday. These teachers may not even be able to use the newly authorized books and films to their full advantage.

Seton Hall University now offers a graduate degree program in Studies in Judaism and Christianity leading to a Master's degree. Courses, taught by Jewish and Christian scholars, are designed to explore biblical and rabbinic Judaism and the Jewish texture of the Gospels. Through a historical perspective, students will be able to discover Christianity's roots in Judaism and its bond to the Jewish People. The new program's existential character should lead the students to a deeper vision of their own Faith and life and to an understanding and an appreciation of present-day Jews and Judaism.

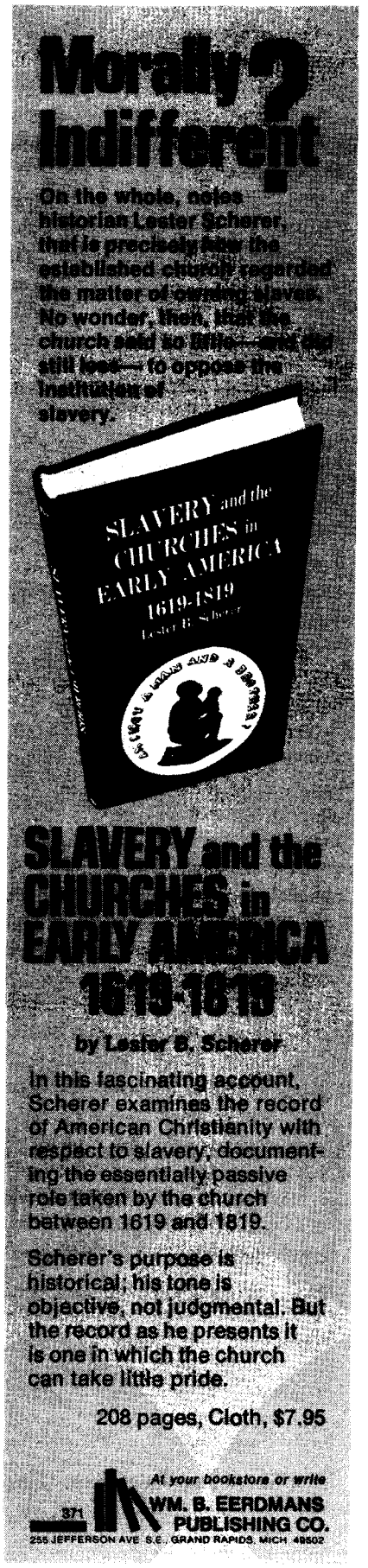
It is programs such as this that teachers and preachers must avail themselves of so an honest appreciation can be had of Jews, Judaism, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel.

(SISTER) ROSE THERING, O.P.
Associate Prof. of Education
Seton Hall University

British Eye's View

Worcester, Mass.

To the Editors: Rosemary Haughton's "A British Eye's View" [4/11/75] is a sensitive comment on the contemporary Catholic scene. I thank her for it. She touches a nerve in all of us, maybe inducing some of that breast beating she doesn't like. Most of us know all the types she mentions, but I think the "phony" types are relatively few. In fact, there are very few Catholics I know who aren't having their troubles. The swinging groups of a few years ago are more subdued, more modest, more troubled. They know something of the difficulties of living like Christians in our culture; they know, too, the difficulty of maintaining their families, raising their children, doing their jobs well, and paying their bills, the last a far more rugged task than a few years ago. Radical changes in life style, which she appreciates, are desired; few know how to pull it off *responsibly*. The successful ones she mentions seem to have a good community base, a group of friends who share their concerns and help each other move. Most people, in my experience, yearn for such communities but have not, for one reason or another, been able to build them. They need help, and those who could help: priests, sisters, bishops, most frequently don't appreciate the need; the few who do often go off, to their own life style change, perhaps to the "inner city." Suburban pastors and teachers who come to appreciate the problems Mrs. Haughton raised, find that their own


Morally Indifferent?
On the whole, notes historian Lester Scherer, that is probably how the established church regarded the matter of owning slaves. No wonder, then, that the church said so little—and did still less—to oppose the institution of slavery.
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authentic response to the agony leads them to move away from their working-class or middle-class friends. Lay people move less easily; maybe they shouldn't move. But they often find it difficult to make the changes they want, alone, back home.

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of offering a course to about 40 middle-aged Christians. We spent two full weekends together, with the help of resource people drawn from all parts of the local church. The participants were great people covering the whole range of styles, from conservative ethnics to swinging suburbanites. At the end of the two weekends, they left to spend some time preparing their religious autobiographies. The product was a set of 40 remarkable documents, each offering evidence of serious reflection on life history. One lesson came through clearly, to me at least. People are very complicated, and are seldom what they seem. Liberals and conservatives alike have experienced hurts at the hands of the church. They are angry, fearful, desperately anxious for some understanding and support. They are invariably alone, even in the midst of loving families and thriving parishes. It struck me then, as so often before, that if the church fails it does so most remarkably in the area of its supposed strength: its pastoral sensitivity. Only a few lucky ones in that group had found ministers to help heal their hurt; most had found a lack of responsiveness from their pastors which was staggering.

It all suggests to me that beneath the contemporary concerns of charismatics and social activists alike, lies the more basic concern of community: koinonia. To care about each other, to listen to each other, to offer not money or liturgical excitement or educational packets but simply some friendship and care, maybe these are the *sine qua non* of effective Christian renewal in other areas. I think a lot of us would like to tell Mrs. Haughton that we really do care about the Gospel, we really do share the hope for a better life for all God's people, and we really are trying to change. While it may look easy out there in the suburbs, it's very tough. If the priests and religious who are supposed to serve us will help us heal the hurts within and among us, we could do great things. Perhaps what she heard from those groups she met was in fact a plea for such help. DAVID O'BRIEN

Worcester, Mass.

To the Editors: The new apologetics for the banal state of the Catholic Church in the U.S. fills the religious press these days. *NCR* has succumbed completely —honest and direct critiques of the establishment don't sell cassettes, apparently; and "the good gray *Commonweal*," as Warren Hinckle calls it, prefers to talk around most of the really hard religious issues. (Those feckless comments about what a good guy the Pope is and what great help the Church was to us ethnic clods, in pubescence. Well, *really!*)

Yes, of course, there are visible signs of renewal—among women's communi-

Abortion Laws

. . . THE CHOICE TODAY is between living under the Supreme Court's ruling and attempting to overturn or modify it in order to enact moderately restrictive abortion laws. There are two messages conveyed to society under the Supreme Court's ruling. The first message, conveyed by the hundreds of thousands of unrestrained abortions under that decision, is that human fetal life is of little or no value and that respect for human life itself is in question. The second message is that almost all abortions are legally and morally respectable because a person's constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy outweighs the claims of the fetus.

The message of moderately restrictive abortion laws, in contrast, would be that the fetus is entitled to the protection of the law, that abortion should be restrained, not encouraged, by our society, and that abortions are a grave matter, not to be undertaken at the whim of any person. . . .

—DANIEL A. DEGNAN, S.J.
Commonweal, May 31, 1974

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ties, urban ministries, and Catholic-Worker-style resistance groups. But where is this work celebrated in the Church? The pervasive atmosphere in Catholic schools, churches and universities is dull, dull, dull—in liturgy, the arts, theological education.

Can you name one American Catholic writer who expects and insists upon honesty and openness in the Church? who fixes a passionate intellect on the bamboozling hierarchy as gleefully as he/she does on the pontificating state? Wilfrid Sheed, in *Three Mobs: Union, Church, and Mafia* (1975), is the sole exception I can think of, but he's an Englishman. No one since Mary McCarthy, in *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood*, has shown such strong feeling for or against Catholicism. It's enough to make one wish, somehow, that Paul Blanshard were still writing those scurrilous exposés. He cared enough to say the very worst, and talked as if the Church were a healthy, rather than deformed child, constantly in need of protections.

Rosemary Haughton's comment about the "well-developed jargon of political and philosophical analysis" gets close to the Catholic problem—for theologians and Church journalists everything is strictly academic—in a way that her blunted, cautious criticism and her emphasis upon humility and suffering (the traditional jargon again) does not. There is enough suffering around without asking the Church for more; the difficulty is having enough energy left, after resistance to suffering, to do something about it. In this regard, finding alternatives to destructive practice, Paul Goodman's essay "On the Ineffectuality of Some Intelligent People" provides one clue. Practical reasoning about what is to be done, as Goodman says, "is an integration of feeling, sensation, and motor behavior." The Church usually prefers to interrupt that natural process by encouraging everyone to be "'umble," "to suffer," even before he/she has a chance to make a stupid or glorious mistake.

But these are matters that ask for more space than I'm allowed here. Suffice it to say that, grateful as I am for Rosemary Haughton's affectionate critique of American Catholicism, I keep hoping for something more. Surely there's more life stirring in Old Mother Church ("She's a whore, but she's our Mother") than we're willing to admit. Otherwise why all the repression from the chancery, the press, the official spokesmen? I can see her now, muffled and locked in some rectory closet in Boston—rouged and ready to walk the streets, loud and brassy and fiercely intellectual. How long, Oh Lord!, before she'll be allowed to practice her ancient profession, in America, with a bit more flourish?

MICHAEL TRUE

E for Effort

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Dr. Joseph T. Skehan referring to Father Decker (Correspondence, Apr. 11) writes: "Hosannah. . . . E. Courtney Murray yet lives." Who's 'E.?

(REV.) THURSTON DAVIS, S.J.

'E's a typo, that who.—Ed.

Mid-East Muddle

Martinsburg, W. Va.

To the Editors: Your two articles on the Mid-East by Klare and Gurney [Mar. 14] reminded me of the story about the man who escaped from a Nazi concentration camp and went about the Warsaw ghetto with the warning "they are killing all the Jews." The community responded by ignoring him. As one of their esteemed elders said to him, "It's a lie. You have no right to frighten the people."

I began to feel like that old man when reading your articles. Could it be, we are presently caught in the same dilemma as the European Jewish community? They could either resist their fate, fighting back and thereby proving the charges made against them, proving their 'anti-social' status, (and also effectively easing the consciences of their enthusiastic executioners) or, they could simply accept the inevitable with quiet dignity.

Could it be that we, the members of the American and Russian political 'ghettos,' are already within that area of choice?

ANTHONY F. ATKINSON

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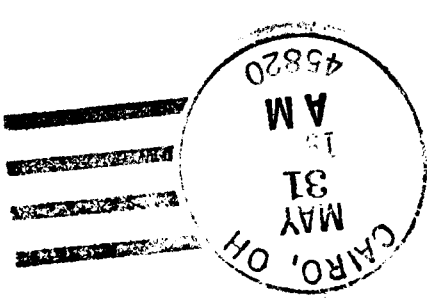

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